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No. 204.

THE MADMAN'S INVOCATION.

BY WALLACE PUTNAM REED.

Come, Spirit of Eternal Evil,
And view with me our joint estate;
Rejoice as a brother Devil
Made one by strong, immortal hate;
A fire within my brain is burning,
My heart is pulseless as a stone,
No fear that Reason is returning,
That false pretender to the throne!

Right royal is the realm before us,
And royal we—Perdition's peers—
Where now is He who lorded o'er us?
And where the work of Christian years?
Answer!—ye sorrow-laden ages—
Tell us your gain, tell us your loss,
That we may cry to the sages—
The saints who bow before the Cross.

Corruption rules, in States and Churches,
And wins far more than Honesty;
And reputations, free from smirches,
Are those most full of mystery;
Gold buys as much, Steel kills as many
As o'er they did, in days gone by,
And this is true of all and any,
As one may see, if he will try.

Murder, and Lust, and Avarice carry
Before them all that strikes their greed,
And in their course they never tarry,
But onward rush with lightning speed;
All that a man should prize most highly,
And keep most closely to himself,
And that which woman thinks of shyly—
All this is sold for sordid pelf.

Then come, my patient, brother Devil,
And view with me this broad expanse,
Luxuriant, with its gorgeous evil,
Our eyes may sweep it at a glance;
Now tell me if the world is needing
Another sin—a single one—
To help the others, still a-breeding?—
That look spoke truth—our work is done!

WOLFGANG, The Robber of the Rhine:

OR,
THE YOUNG KNIGHT OF THE CROSSBORDE.

BY CAPT. FREDK. WHITTAKER,
AUTHOR OF "NADIA, THE RUSSIAN SPY," "THE
RED RIFLE," "THE SEA CAT," "THE
ROCK RIDER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FLOWER OF COURTESY.

The full moon shone down through the dense foliage of the dark forest, peeping in here and there through the little gaps among the leaves, and weaving bright patterns on the thin grass and brown earth below. There was no underwood to make it dangerous to travel, only immense overhanging oaks above, where the peasants said the fairies were wont to dance in the moonlight, in the magic circles of fungi.

Through the silent arches of this great forest suddenly sounded the snort of a horse, and presently a single horseman, accompanied by three great dogs, came riding through the greenwood at a rapid walk.

It was the audacious Sir Adelbert, the rein hanging loose on his charger's neck, the sagacious creature moving confidently forward, as if he well knew where he was going.

The young knight was talking to his four friends, and they all seemed as though they understood him. The horse kept one ear cocked backward, as if he were listening, and every now and then uttered a low whinny. The dogs answered with little whines, and a low smothered *snuff*, their tails waving back and forth unwearily.

"Well, dogs! Well, Tristram, old horse!" said Adelbert, "we shall soon reach safe harbor for the night, now. Tristram knows the way to the nearest stable, and where to find shelter for us all. We have had a long journey and a weary one, but it will soon be over. Good old Tristram! Thou art a better friend than a brother, for thou hast brought me home at last, or what is as good now."

And he patted his charger's neck affectionately at the sight of a light gleaming through the wood afar off.

The horse stepped out faster than ever, breaking into a glad neigh, and quickening his pace to a trot, while all three dogs simultaneously broke out into joyful barks, and galloped on ahead.

In a few minutes they had arrived in front of a clearing in the woods, which opened into the cultivated country once more, and beheld before them a long, low, rambling stone farmhouse, heavily thatched. The light proceeded from a window in this house, at one end of the building, in a sort of extension or kitchen. Sir Adelbert rode boldly up to the door, and called out:

"Hutse! Hutse! Within there!"

The house was immediately thrown open, and a comely peasant-woman made her appearance on the threshold, with a child in her arms. She seemed to have been expecting some one, for she showed no surprise.

"Max, is 't thou?" she exclaimed. "Baby and I have been watching for thee since sunset. We heard the hounds bark, and guessed 'twas thou. Come in."

"Good lady," said Sir Adelbert, with as much courtesy as though he were addressing a princess, "I fear you take me for some one else."



Max, the Ranger, bent his great bow and sent a white arrow whizzing through the air.

"Heaven forbid I should refuse you hospitality, but there are so many false knights and robbers in these parts that I feared you might be one."

Sir Adelbert dismounted, and advanced into the light of the open doorway.

"Look at me well, dame," he said, gently; "and if you still fear to admit me, I will go on."

The young mother looked earnestly into the handsome, high-bred face, lit up by the open, pleasant smile that distinguished Sir Adelbert.

The baby that was sitting up in her arms, looking out on the world with her innocent blue eyes, settled the point. The child stretched out its arms, with a soft coo, to the handsome knight, and the mother instantly relented.

"You must be good, my lord," she said, simply, "or little Gretchen would not want to go to you. Enter and welcome."

"Kind dame," said the knight, smiling, "I fear I must trouble you first to show me where your stable is, for my horse has traveled far to-day."

"Certainly, my lord," said the dame. "We have fodder and stable-room in plenty. Follow me."

She came boldly out and opened a door at one end of the rambling house, which proved to be that of a great lean-to stable, opening into the house itself from within. The dame opened the door inside, and the light from the inner room streamed into the stable, while she pointed out to the knight several large stalls, with hay and grain in profusion. She did not seem to be afraid of the three great boar-hounds who walked around her sedately, waving their tails slowly, now and then licking her hands.

"Oh, I know them well enough," she answered, to a remark of Sir Adelbert on the subject; "Max has two just like them, that he bought as puppies, from the gracious emperor's keeper. They smell their friends' scent on my clothes, and that's why they come round me. Sir knight, you have a beautiful horse there."

"I think so, dame," said Sir Adelbert, patting the feeding charger's neck, affectionately. "He comes from an Arabian stallion that my great grandsire brought from the great Crusade, and the blood has given such life and swiftness to the horses in our family, that we keep them sacred. Now, dame, I am ready. Tristram will do for the night."

The dame shut the outer door, and led master and dogs into the little kitchen.

"Be seated, sir knight," she said, as quietly as if she had known him for years. "I will feed your poor dogs, for they must be hungry, and then we will have supper, if Max does not come in soon. Ah! there he is!"

The sound of voices outside aroused him from his reverie, and directly afterward his hostess entered the room, followed by a short man with immense breadth of shoulders, very long, brawny arms, bare to the shoulder, and a square, determined, but good-humored face, half-hidden by a portentous yellow beard.

"This is my husband, Max, the Ranger," said the dame, frankly. "He is come to welcome your lordship."

Sir Adelbert stood up in the low kitchen, his bright curls reaching within a foot of the ceiling, and held out his hand.

"Friend Max," he said, "thou hast a brave little wife, to stay all alone here. I have heard thy name before, I think. Thou art Ranger to the Margrave of Wurtemberg. Is't not so?"

The Ranger looked up at the lofty figure of the knight, and glanced over his rich dress. He twined his own leather cap between his hands, and seemed startled abashed.

"Yes, my lord—I mean—your—" he stammered.

"Call me Sir Adelbert, Max," said the knight, impressively, "while I am here; remember that."

"Yes, Sir Adelbert," said Max, in a low voice.

"And now, dame," said Sir Adelbert, laughing, "if you have any mercy on two hungry hunters and five hungry dogs, give Max the baby and let us have some supper, and please you."

Honest Max took his baby in his arms without saying a word, still keeping his eyes on the ground, but glancing up furtively at the stranger, when he thought he was not looking. His wife bustled about to set the table, with a running commentary of remarks to her husband as an aside.

"Sit up, Max. Don't be so bashful," she said. "The strange lord won't eat you. Talk to him and amuse him, or he'll think you grudge him the hospitality."

Then to Sir Adelbert: "Pray excuse him, Sir Adelbert. My good man is always dashed at the sight of great folks, though why he should at you I don't see, for a more civil gentleman never entered our house."

To Max: "Mercy, man! Mind what you're about! You'll drop the baby if you're so awkward. See, she wants to go to the knight."

In fact, the baby's father seemed to be incapable of doing any thing but sit and look awkward, and the baby, being uncomfortable, began to fidget and writh about, with evident longings toward the glittering dress of the strange knight. Sir Adelbert stretched out his arms with a smile, and the baby responded with a crouch.

"Give her to me, Max," said the splendid stranger; and the Ranger awkwardly rose, blushing excessively, and obeyed the request.

The knight, in all his bravery of velvet and gold, took the poor Ranger's child on his knee, and talked to and played with her as if he had been at it all his life, while the mother looked delightedly on, and the father gazed at the spectacle as if he was bewildered.

A low scratching and whining of the dog's head at the door and Sir Adelbert's hounds raised their heads quickly, and one of them whined in answer.

"Manners!" cried the knight, sharply. The dog shrunk down as if ashamed of himself, and his companions followed his example immediately.

"Have you got your hounds in as good order as that, Max?" asked Sir Adelbert, smiling. The Ranger stood up, as stiff as a post, instantly. The question made him professional at once.

"Yes, Sir Adelbert," he said, plainly enough. "Let them in, then, if you can keep them from fighting," said the knight.

The Ranger went to the door and let in two boar-hounds as large as Sir Adelbert's. The stately creatures stalked solemnly into the room, without noticing the knight, but halted and uttered a suspicious growl at the sight of the three stranger hounds. Instantly five backs rose, and five sets of white teeth were shown, while a low growl, like the mutter of thunder, became audible from the great beasts.

"Si!" said Max.

"Manners!" said Sir Adelbert again. The dogs became as still as death in a moment.

Then Max, the Ranger, pointed with his finger to a place beside Sir Adelbert's hounds, and sternly ordered his dogs to sit.

The well-trained creatures lay down side by side with the others, and assumed the same attitude, when there was peace in the cottage.

And now the dame announced supper as ready, and Sir Adelbert set to with a hearty appetite on black bread and bacon. But Max, the Ranger, seemed still to be unable to eat for bashfulness. Sir Adelbert noticed it.

"Dame," he said, suddenly, "what name shall I call you?"

"Gretchen, an't please you, my lord," she said, courtseying; "the same as little Gretchen."

stroy him, but he shut himself up in his castle and defied them. And there was a great, strong squire in his service, called Wolfgang, and he grew into great favor with Sir Rudolph because he could overthrow any knight among them in the tilt. But this Wolfgang was a traitor after all. The knights of the Robbers' League suddenly retired from before the castle, and Wolfgang swore they were gone. And Sir Rudolph went out hunting one day with his squire and some pages, leaving the lady Bertha in the castle with their baby, just like our little Gretchen there. And he never came back alive."

"Hut! and what happened to him?" asked Sir Adelbert, in an earnest tone of interest.

"Wolfgang ran back at full gallop to the castle," said the Ranger, "pursued by a squad of men-at-arms, who took care not to catch him. He told the lady Bertha how they had been surprised, and how Sir Rudolph was dead from an arrow in his breast. And then the castle was besieged again, and between fear and grief the lady Bertha died, leaving the baby, about six months old then, to Wolfgang for a guardian. But, once she was dead, Wolfgang opened the castle gates, admitted the enemy, and one of the robber knights dubbed him, the traitor, a knight of the Empire. Well do I remember the day, for I was a boy, in the train of the castle ranger, then, and Sir Wolfgang made us all swear fealty to him, on pain of instant death."

"Well," said Sir Adelbert, "is that all?"

"That was seventeen years ago," said Max; "and ever since that he has been the terror of the country. I left his service, and took the place of Ranger to the Margrave, ten years ago, and since then we have not been troubled with his requisitions. The Margrave is too powerful for him."

"And since the coming of our blessed emperor, Rudolph of Hapsburg, whom the saints preserve!" said Gretchen, piously, "we have been praying that the good emperor would hear of his deeds and come with an army to exterminate him and all his friends. Oh! Sir Knight! you seem to be some great lord. If you could only see the good emperor, and tell him what a wicked wretch is this Wolfgang, and how he has robbed the poor dear child, Lady Bertha, who knows what might happen!"

Sir Adelbert smiled.

"Perhaps the emperor knows it, already," he said. "Germany was in a sad state when he took the throne, a year ago, but everything cannot be done at once. What made this Wolfgang take the name of Ernstein?"

"For spite," said the Ranger, gruffly. "He was a poor falconer, and your worship knows, Sir Adelbert, that the falcon is a gentle bird, and will abide none but those of high degree near her. This Wolfgang was the son of a butcher, and the falcons of Falkenstein grew disgusted when he came, and left their nest to build elsewhere. The robber tried to take their nestlings to train for *eyases*. He had no man in his thieving band could reclaim a *haggard*. When they left he sent a man to lie in wait and shoot a golden eagle, which he took for his crest, and called himself Ernstein, but no eagle ever built there, since he came. The people here call it Schweinstein or Hog's Rock now."

Sir Adelbert laughed.

"You are a good falconer, Max," he said. The Ranger growled. His professional pride was in question. "A falcon and a highbred hound are gentlemen," he said; "they love not these upstarts. Gold spurs do not make a knight of Wolfgang, nor ever will. A falcon knows better than a man how to tell a gentleman."

"And what do you think a gentleman ought to be, Max?" asked Sir Adelbert, smilingly.

"A true knight," said Max, simply and reverently.

"Thou'rt right, Max," said the knight, gravely; "and a true knight should be brave, honorable, and as gentle as a woman to all beneath him. If he is such, he is worthy of knight-hood. Without it, the sword of the Holy Father Pope himself could not make him one whit better than before."

"How few true knights there are!" said Gretchen, simply.

"Dame," said Sir Adelbert, "pray that there may be more, to cleanse this sink of iniquity. Pray that our knights may carry the cross in their hearts as their ancestors did *over* them, when they won the Holy Sepulcher. Then shall poor bleeding Germany return to peace, and these Robbers of the Rhine be taught the lesson, RIGHT NOT MIGHT."

He stood up as he spoke, with a strange solemn dignity pervading his earnest young face, and signed to Max.

The Ranger jumped up with alacrity, and obeyed the mute signal, given, as if unconsciously, by one used to be obeyed.

CHAPTER V.

THE SLEUTH-HOUNDS.

The next morning rose bright and clear, and at an early hour Max the Ranger stood by his door holding two horses by the bridles and surrounded by the five gigantic boar-hounds, now apparently excellent friends. Their dead comrade was buried.

One of the horses was Red Tristram, as fresh as a daisy; the other was the Ranger's bay cob. In the full light of morning one could see the vast strength of Max's sturdy frame. Short as he was, he appeared to possess the brawn of a bull, while yet very lean and large-boned. His legs were slightly bowed from his constant riding, and bare as far as his ankles. His whole dress being a tight jerkin without sleeves, and breeches half way to the knee, both

* The eyes was the young hawk taken from the nest. The haggard is the full grown wild falcon, caught in a net, and consequently more difficult to reclaim or tame.

of leather. He carried a mighty bow and quiver, and a short ax hung at his girdle.

Sir Adelbert, trim, neat and handsome as ever, stood by the doorway, talking to Dame Gretchen, with the little baby in her arms.

"Farewell, dame," he said, kindly. "For your hospitality accept the thanks of a knight who honors his knighthood as better than himself. Your husband has promised to show me the way to the Margrave's, whom I would see. Little Gretchen will kiss me goodbye, I doubt not, and wear this in memory of Sir Adelbert."

And he took from his neck a costly gold chain and passed it over the child's fat neck. Little Gretchen caught hold of the bright links and crowded with delight, while her mother's face seemed to shine with pleasure. The knight kissed the child's innocent brow, and was turning away, when the deep bay of a hound, followed by a second at no great distance, startled every one.

Max looked toward the woods angrily.

"It is a sleuth-hound," he said, "and on the track, too, of the Margrave's woods. Who has dared to do this?"

Sir Adelbert listened intently. The sound was coming toward them.

"Are there any other rangers near here?" he asked of Max.

"Not one," said the other, angrily. "I am the only man that has a right to range these woods, except the Margrave and his friends."

"Has the Margrave any friends near here?" asked the knight.

"Impossible," said Max sturdily; "his lordship knows me, and—by St. Hubert! they're coming this way."

"I thought so," said Sir Adelbert, calmly; "it is Wolfgang of Erntstein, or some of his men on the hunt."

"He!" cried Max, aghast with anger and astonishment; "I'll shoot the brute if he comes within range."

"They are not after deer," said Sir Adelbert, quietly; "they are after me."

Max dropped both bridles in his excess of wonder. He glanced apprehensively at Gretchen, then, as if afraid his ears had deceived him, he said in a low voice:

"Not you—Sir Adelbert. They dare not."

For all answer, Sir Adelbert stepped to him.

The low savage bay was coming straight toward the Ranger's cottage. It came nearer and nearer.

Now they could hear the gallop of several horses over the withered leaves. Sir Adelbert turned to Gretchen, and spoke firmly and rapidly, as one accustomed to command.

"Go into the house, dame," he said. "If you have a cellar or any strong hiding-place, hide quickly. Danger's afoot."

"To the secret closet under the stable!" cried Max. "The devils are coming, sure enough. For your life! I am quite safe."

Poor Gretchen uttered a cry of alarm, and vanished into the house.

"To horse, Max," said Sir Adelbert, quickly. "We must fight, I say."

In another moment the two were on horseback, and moving toward the wood whence the baying came.

"I wonder they did not think of this before," said Sir Adelbert, thoughtfully; "I suppose they thought to catch me asleep."

The Ranger suddenly pulled up and sprung to the ground.

"Here they come," he said, briefly; and he strung his bow as he spoke, and drew out half a dozen arrows from his quiver, which he threw on the ground at his feet.

Sir Adelbert looked forward. Two deep tawny bloodhounds, with black muzzles, came loping along in front of a party of seven or eight horsemen in blue livery, with a gilt eagle on each man's breast.

As soon as the newcomers saw the two men, they uttered a great shout, and came forward, brandishing, each man, a couple of boar-spears.

Sir Adelbert shook his own javelin, and waited in silence. Max the Ranger bent his great bow when they were within fifty yards, and sent a white arrow, a good yard in length, whizzing through the air.

One of the bloodhounds rolled over and over with a faint howl, spitted through the body, and his companion paused in alarm.

With a shout of encouragement to his own great boar-hounds, Sir Adelbert set spurs to Red Tristram and rode at his enemies.

CHAPTER VI.
SIR ADELBERT'S MESSAGE.

Sir Wolfgang of Erntstein sat on the raised dais of his castle hall, with his head bound up, eating his breakfast, and listening to the report of his head ranger, commonly known as Red Max, from his fiery beard. Red Max was a truculent ruffian with lowering brow, as different in expression from his honest namesake, Max the Ranger, as could be imagined, while his figure was not unlike the latter's.

"So the trackers did not start till midnight, my lord," he was saying; "your worship gave me full discretion, and I took it. I knew that if this stranger were out in the woods and heard the hounds, he would know he was pursued. He might have sent back his own hounds to fight ours, and escaped himself. But if we let him get to shelter, he could not go very far, and we could probably take him by surprise in the morning. So I sent eight riders, with a pair of sleuth-hounds, after him, and they must have found him about dawn, for the dogs started on the track at a round pace."

Sir Wolfgang gave a satisfied grunt, and drank off a cup of Rhenish wine.

"When do you expect them back," he asked.

"Very soon, my lord. It is ten of the clock now, and I told them to gallop back with him as soon as they found him, dead or alive."

"The Lord grant they don't kill him," said Sir Wolfgang, grimly; "I would have him here before me bound. I will make him feel what it is to lose an eye. I will cut him to pieces, limb by limb, and feed his flesh to the dogs, while he shall look on at the feast. Would they were back now!"

Red Max put up his hand in sign of attention.

"That must be them, now," he said. "I hear horses' feet on the stones of the courtyard."

He ran to the window and looked out.

"There they are, my lord," he said, joyfully. There's Peter the Killer, who led the party. The rest must be under the archway."

"Run and bring them. Quick, Max," said Sir Wolfgang, rubbing his hands with ferocious glee. "Bring him in."

Red Max rushed off down the hall and out into the castle-yard, while Sir Wolfgang waited in his great chair.

As he sat there, looking eagerly toward the door with his remaining eye, Bertha von Falkenstein glided into the room behind his chair, and stood near him.

He did not notice her, so fierce and intent was his gaze on the hall door. The moments of waiting grew into minutes, and still no Red Max came.

"What the devil ails them?" growled Sir

Wolfgang angrily. "It can't be—Hell's fires on them!—They haven't failed!"

Bertha glided forward, and put her white hand on his arm.

"My lord," she said softly.

Wolfgang started as if he had been shot. She was on his blind side. He wheeled round fiercely and demanded:

"What do you mean, creeping cat of the castle, by coming in like that? What do you want?—I'm busy."

Bertha recoiled, trembling.

"So please, my lord, she began; "I only wished to know if I might still have permission to walk in the little court on the battlements by the river. I pine in my chamber, and Father Francis says that I need the air."

Sir Wolfgang regarded her something as a tiger might do after a full meal. He did not feel quite justified in tearing her to pieces, not feeling hungry just then.

"Yes," he growled, with his accustomed easy grace; "I don't want to ill treat you, creeping cat. Nobody can say I don't give you plenty of fine clothes, whenever I can find a lot of merchants with such things. You needn't go around looking as if you were afraid. I won't kill you. Walk where you like, but keep out of the castle court. The dogs there run at every woman they find. I thought them."

He gave a grim chuckle at the pale face, and the girl shrunk back to the door, just as Red Max's voice was heard outside, saying:

"Come along, Peter, and tell your story."

"THEY'VE FAILED!" roared Sir Wolfgang, leaping to his feet, and he strode off down the hall.

Bertha stood behind the door, which she held ajar, and peeped down after him. The door was in the shadow, and she was quite unseen, while able to behold all that passed in the hall.

Red Max entered the hall, dragging after him the reluctant figure of a second ruffian, whom she recognized as Peter the Killer.

She saw Sir Wolfgang rush at this man, seize him as a mastiff might a terrier, and shake him with all the vast strength of his powerful frame.

"Dog!" roared the irate castellan, "where is your prisoner? What do you back here without him? Speak, or I'll throttle you!"

And he flung the Killer up against the wall, and stood before him foaming with rage.

Peter the Killer was a cutthroat and assassin by trade, but he cowered before the more powerful villain.

"We could not help it, my lord," he faltered. "We found him but he had help. Let me speak first, my lord, and then kill me if you will."

"Speak, then," said Sir Wolfgang, more quietly; "tell me the whole story, and then we shall see if you deserve death or not."

Peter the Killer trembled and told his story.

"My lord," he said, "we took out the hounds at night, and followed the Margrave's track. I run here and there, as if the rider had lost his way, and finally went off in a straight line, through the woods of the Margrave of Wurtemberg. Just about sunrise we came to where the Margrave's ranger lives, Max Stoffer, who is properly your vassal, my lord. He ran away the year after Lady Bertha's."

"Silence," growled Sir Wolfgang, with a strange look; "no more of that, Peter. I know that Max Stoffer; and I'll be even with him some day, curse him! But not yet. The Margrave musters five hundred lances. Go on."

"In front of the cottage," continued Peter, "we found the stranger and that same Max together, with five boar-hounds. We charged them; but before we could get there, Max had shot both our dogs, and Karl Keiser. The stranger then charged us, with all the dogs. He was a perfect devil. He sent his boar-spear into another man's heart, and used his sword like a master. Still, we could have taken him, easy enough, but for those dogs. The brutes came on all together, and had five men off their horses in a twinkling. Max Stoffer shot my horse, and the fight was over before you would have thought it begun. Every man there was speared, shot, or torn to pieces in two minutes."

Wolfgang glared at the Killer for several minutes in silence.

"And you," he said, at last, in a low, stifled voice, "how came you here alive?"

"Through the stranger's whim," said Peter, humbly; "I was under my horse, and one of the devils of dogs was coming at me when the stranger knight called out to him, 'Monseigneur! The brute lay down like a lamb in an instant. Then the stranger and Max Stoffer pulled me out, set me on a horse, and told me to go home and give you a message.'

"What is it?" queried the castellan, frowning fearfully.

"If your worship will promise not to kill me," began Peter, deprecatingly, "it is not I who say the words, but the stranger."

"Say the words first," said Sir Wolfgang, grimly. "I'll see whether you deserve death on your own merits."

Thus urged, Peter broke out into a profuse sweat, and his knees knocked together.

"The message! Quick!" thundered his patron, shaking him furiously, "or I'll kill thee anyhow."

Peter the Killer fell on his knees and writhed up to embrace those of his master. His face was ashy-pale with the craven fear of death.

"Oh! master, for the love of God!" he implored, "don't kill me. Let me rot in a dungeon, but don't kill me. Oh! I'm so wicked, and Father Francis says the devils have red-hot forks to stick in one."

Sir Wolfgang dealt him a furious blow with his clenched hand, that knocked him down on the stone pavement. He lifted his foot to stamp on him, his face crimson with passion.

"The message!" he bellowed; "the message, quick, cur and dastard, or I'll stamp your bowels out on the floor."

Peter the Killer was driven to desperation, and he writhed up on his knees, once more, with a howl of:

"Mercy! Mercy! I'll tell! Indeed I will!"

"Then tell quick!" growled the castellan, drawing back, and looking down at him with contempt. Peter breathed hard and clasped his hands with a look of abject terror and supplication.

"The stranger said," he mumbled, in a faint whisper of extreme fear, "Tell Wolfgang, the butler's son, that I shall come to his castle before the leaves are brown. That his father's cleverest thief steals from his heels the spurs he has disgraced, and that he and his friends shall swing from the trees in front of Falkenstein Castle before Michaelmas."

Peter shrunk up against the wall, expecting to receive at least a dagger-thrust. To his surprise his amiable patron was silent.

He looked up. The castellan had turned his back, and was walking up the hall slowly, with his hands behind him. He turned presently and came back, surveying Peter with a thoughtful gaze.

"Repeat the message," he said, quietly.

Peter repeated it, word for word. When he had done, his master laid his hand on his shoulder with sudden kindness.

"Go to the kitchen and eat, Peter," he said; "you are tired and hungry. No man can be

certain of any thing in war. Send Father Francis to me."

Peter the Killer rose slowly, relief and bewilderment struggling together in his face.

"Yes, my lord," he said, and vanished.

Sir Wolfgang sat in his chair in a brown study, and Bertha softly closed the door to retreat. In the passage to her chamber she met the good friar, and told him the story. Father Francis reflected and said:

"The wicked flee when no man pursueth. He is frightened at the message."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 203.)

The Silver Serpent:
OR,
THE MYSTERY OF WILLOWOLD.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,
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CHAPTER VII.
FORCING THE DRUG. CROSIER'S ALLY.

THE beautiful captive was but a mere child in the hands of the ruffian, Thadlis, who, mocking her impotence, and chuckling gutturally as he pinned her arms and form in his giant embrace, presently growled:

"Here you are, colonel; down with it!"

He had her bent across his knee, her regal head forced backward, and the long hair flowing its opulence on the floor.

Helpless and despairing, yet she flashed a glance of fire and hate from her set eyes; and shoulders, neck and features were dyed by the hot flush of mounting blood.

"So you will not take it, eh?" snarled Colonel Paul Gregor, laying a hand upon her head, and leering down into the upturned face. "You act like a fool! With this you are made to forget. You will not, under its influence, realize your unhappy fate. A few mouthfuls, and a pleasant cloud comes over your mind, all pain is careased away. You know this—yet you would refuse—"

"Stay! In the name of Heaven! do not force me to drink it. Leave me my senses. Let me live a rational being, even in this tomb! Oh, pity! Have you no heart? Don't—don't give it to me! Its soothing is worse than death—an everlasting nightmare—for even in the insensibility it brings, my tortured brain is striving, aching, bursting. Oh, have pity! Do not poison me any more. Release me—ruffian! let me go! Take away that deadly flask!"

"Be about it, then, colonel!" grumbled the stabler, as she twisted her delicate wrists and struggled afresh.

Gregor forced open her mouth, and the gurgling gurgle of the pouring liquid strangled the rising shriek of her victim.

She resisted desperately, trying to spit out the horrid stuff; but he poured on steadily, and, despite the writhing of her frail figure and the pitiful pleading of those lustrous eyes, the drug was slowly administered by the relentless fiend.

When the last drop dripped from the flask, Colonel Gregor drew back, and Thadlis released her from his vise-like grip.

She staggered dizzily from them, walking several feet with a drunken step, and rending her hair with her soft white hands. They regarded her complacently.

"Oh—devil!" she moaned, tottering to and fro, "you shall be judged for this. No pity on my poor life!—no feeling!—heartless murderers! But I will not yield! No, no—it shall not eat my frame away. I will think; I will keep my brain busy, that it may not grow torpid—it shall not be palled by your poisons!"

She was silent, working and tossing her arms, rapping her temples, struggling with all her soul to combat the influence fast creeping upon her. But it was useless. Already the drug was working its effect, darting electric throes and spasmodic blindness to her nerves and eyes. She was rapidly succumbing; but without a battle, and the ordeal was fearful.

Immovable and waiting, the two regarded her.

"Oh, Heaven! my head—my head! I can not help it. I can no longer resist. It is coming! darkness—light—darkness again. Flashes. My veins are ice! My flesh creeps. Horrors—horrors—off! off! away. Oh, God! I am becoming mad again—crazy! crazy! Help me!—Hark!" and here she ceased the frenzied strain, ceased that giddy, swaying walk, ceased swinging her bare arms aloft, was suddenly and wondrously passive. "I hear music. There's music somewhere. Some one is singing: it is the voice of Jules Willoughby. Jules!—dear Jules! Come—oh! I come to me. See: it is Stella!"

Her whole mind sunk to an unnatural calm; her eyes stared strangely.

Thadlis grinned, pointed at her, and gave his employer a wink.

"Stella Bellerayon," said the colonel, in a disguised voice.

She started and gradually turned upon him.

"Who called me? Where am I? I thought it was Jules!"

"You are in your castle! Do you not recognize me? I am your messenger—who am hunting for Jules Willoughby."

She bent up to him, and gazed searchingly into his face.

"I loved Jules," she breathed, huskily.

"Yes, you loved him. But, he did not love you in return, and fled from you."

"So he did—so he did," in a dreamy, pensive tone; then seriously: "You told me if I would let you put me to sleep, that Jules would come and take me in a carriage to the church to be married. Where is he? This is his castle, and yet he is not here. How long have I been asleep?"

"Curse her!" exclaimed Colonel Paul Gregor, inwardly, "she will never get that out of her head, no matter how much I drug her."

And aloud: "You have not been in the castle long—only a few nights."

"What queer dreams I have had. But where is Jules? I am waiting for him."

"I have searched diligently for him," the colonel said, smoothing back the silken hair from her temples, "but can not find him yet. Be patient; he will come soon. You had better retire now; it is late. Go into your room, Stella, and sleep."

"And while I sleep will you hunt for Jules?" she asked, meekly.

"Yes," he promised, "Come to your room now; all will be well."

"I'll do whatever you say, if you will hunt for Jules," said the drugged beauty, allowing him to lead her, passive as an obedient child.

"Good-night, then," as he gently thrust her beyond the iron door.

In a second he swung the door to and locked it, and turned upon Thadlis with a smile and look of devilish triumph.

"Safe!—safe again!" he hissed.

"By Satan! I'm glad of it. Now, colonel, this must happen no more. It is the fourth time in two years, and you see, she can not be persuaded to it as formerly. Put a supply in the cask."

"Yes, I will fix that." He went to a small table in one corner—a small, round-top, no-snicked table, such as may be seen in a lady's boudoir—on which rested a polished ebony box or casket.

Into the box he placed a handful of tiny brown papers, similar to the one from which he had used the powder that produced the terrible change in Stella Bellerayon.

"Now, Thadlis, you will remain here tonight. I shall be over before noon, when you are taking Stella out for her usual exercise. Perdition! I am glad we had no more trouble than this with her—"

"Bad enough as it is!" broke in Thadlis, holding up his bandaged finger. "By Satan! if she tries the knife again, I shall knock her in the head. But what's the hour?"

"After three. The sun will be up in an hour," consulting his watch. "Stretch yourself on the lounge—you've slept there many a night. You've lost sleep; so have I—curse my fault that was the cause!—curse the scoundrel who was in my library! I must look to that, too, ere I go to bed, and see what is missing, if any thing is missing at all. 'Sdeath! I could have sworn it was Jules Willoughby; but maybe Amelia was right—it was mere fancy—I was deceived when I thought I saw him in town to-day. Bah! I am going, Thadlis."

"Lock the door on the outside and take the key with you," said Thadlis, gathering up the confiscated hat and cape from the floor, and depositing them upon the table. "I'll be asleep before you get away from Willowold. And now I think of it, colonel, you will have to stall the horses. I left them standing in the tool-shed."

The colonel departed, leaving Thadlis examining his huge pistol, to see if it was in condition to shoot; and he laid the weapon aside on the table, with a nod of satisfaction.

In a brief space, the bulky figure of the stabler was lengthened on the lounge, sound in slumber. He lay like a rock, and his sleep was heavy; scarce a muscle twitched, and he snored outrageously.

Beyond the iron door, in a room luxuriously furnished, and on a couch of downy rest, Stella Bellerayon was also sleeping. Her repose was fitful; at times she unconsciously murmured the name of Jules Willoughby.

Varian Crosier's momentary insanity of agony—in which he gouged his scalp with his sharp nails, wrenched at his ears, danced up and down, and hissed and squirmed and whined—came to an abrupt termination.

He was not so absorbed at sight of the woman he believed to be Elise De Martine, at the fact of her being forcibly dragged by the two villains, and his inability to effect an entrance into the cellar which was her prison—not so oblivious in his commingled passion of joy, rage, and despair, as to prevent his hearing a catlike footfall at the head of the ladderway behind him.

The sound sobered him as quickly as if he had been transformed into marble; he landed on his feet in a stooping posture, after one of those monkey-like jumps, statue-like, silent, listening.

Some one was coming down the steps, slowly, feeling the way, pausing anon, as though hearkening for some suspicious breath. Thadlis came; and, forgetting his recent excitement, Elise De Martine—if it was Elise De Martine—forgetting the two men in the opposite cellar, and the possible tableau progressing there, he thought only of probable danger to himself from this source in the rear, gave his entire attention and wonder to the stealthy approach of this intruder upon his eavesdropping, and crouched in the dark below the line of light that shone through the crevice.

"Blood! who's this?" he exclaimed, in his mouth. "Hail! the thief who stole my letters. He is still in the building. Why does he come here? The letters I do not care for now, since I have found my beautiful Elise; but I will punish him for his daring. Prowling ghoul! I shall be at his throat directly!"

Tap—tap—tap, softly thudded the heels of the invisible. Suddenly Crosier sunk down almost to the ground, and a scathing anathema burst from his lips.

Whoever it was had opened the side of a dark lantern, and the brilliant lens, with its spreading ray, chanced to be directed full upon him, half blinding him, taking him so completely by surprise, discovering him so plainly, as he stooped and shrunk like a coiled snake with its venomous head elevated and swaying from side to side, that he could not repress a howl.

With the howl, he darted forward like a springing panther, his narrow face, with its basilisk eyes, distorted to ferocity.

Ere the one who held the lantern could speak, or cry out, or even comprehend his predicament, he felt himself in a grapple of iron, with fingers of steel at his throat, and the hug of a bear round his body; and the two men—for the other was a man—went tumbling over, striking the hard earth thuddingly.

"Robber! I have you now! Death on you! Give me those papers—quick, or I'll throttle you!" coiling his fingers like serpents round the invisible's windpipe.

"Hey!—oh!—ha!—Look out there. Ease up, captain! Will you strangle me?" squealed a familiar voice.

"Blood!"

"Let go, there! What do you want to squeeze me that way for?"

"Wynder—you dog!"

"Yours truly. Sakes alive! you've mashed me to pieces."

"Hush! Quiet! Get up," Crosier said, releasing him.

"What's up, captain?" inquired Wynder, lowly, as he recovered the lantern, which had been dashed across the cellar, but which still burned.

"Dark that lantern, and speak not above your breath. Come here. I have found her—"

"Her? Who?"

"Elise!—my beautiful Elise!" replied Varian Crosier, who was again peeping through the crevice.

The brief scuffle and panted cries had not been heard by those on the opposite side of the wall. The masonry being so thick, and the villains so occupied with their vile perpetration, and the sounds of their task not without its own difficulties and noises, that whatever indication of conflict or disturbance might have penetrated the massive blocks of stone, was effectually drowned.

"Come here, Worth Wynder. Look!" He said.

CHAPTER VIII.
UNFORTUNATE WILLOWOLD.

STELLA BELLERAYON was speaking to the colonel when Varian Crosier returned to his post of observation.

"See her! see her!" he hissed in Wynder's ear, as the latter also looked upon the strange scene.

"Do you hear what she says? She calls for Jules Willoughby—bats at the apothecary's clerk!—and who would call for him but Elise De Martine? Is she not the counterpart of the picture, with some slight change that time

would make? 'Blood and fire! 'tis she—my beautiful Elise!' and he fastens a talon-grip on the shoulder of his follower, so sudden and fierce that Wynder winced and squirmed as if taken with a cramp.

"Ouch! Quit, captain! hang that grip of yours! it is worse than saw-teeth. But, you are mistaken; that cannot possibly be she. Elise De Martine had a purple mole on her temple—you can see it in the picture; and, besides, that bull-of-a-man calls her 'Stella.'"

"No matter," returned Crosier, in a furious whisper. "Time, I say, has erased the slight disfigurement—ten years have refined the jewel; and when he calls her 'Stella,' he lies! Her name is Elise. She is my Elise. 'Blood! you're a fool!'"

"Oh, I know I'm a fool; but that don't alter the fact, in my mind, that this woman, whoever she is, is not—"

"Silence!" interrupted Crosier, sternly.

"I am dumb. If it will please you, then I swear that this is Elise De Martine, the woman whose picture has set you crazy—"

"Rascal!"

"Not another word, captain. See; he takes her through the doorway in the arch. I wonder what's behind there?"

"He is looking her up," Crosier said, half aloud, and noting Gregor's every movement with jealous, flaming eyes. "Now he places a supply of those accursed powders in the casket. Ah! only an hour to daylight, he says. Now he goes. Now that beast lays himself on the lounge. And now we'll to work. Follow me."

"But, I say, captain, what are you going to do? Hang if I like this place; it smells of damp and dead bodies, rotten flesh, or—"

"We shall liberate Elise De Martine, idiot!" Crosier snarled back, taking the lantern from Wynder's hand and leading the way from the vault.

"But her guard—that giant bully—what are we to do with him?"

"Strangle him!" was the savage answer. "Over his dead body, if need be, we will take her from the prison."

Of course, assented the slim humanity; and he added, musingly: "He is still a lunatic! That woman is not Elise De Martine, if the picture is to be relied on; but I must humor his madness, if I want to preserve a whole head," and aloud again: "How did you find her, captain?"

Varian Crosier related what had transpired since he reached Willowold, the loss of the valuable letters and subsequent discoveries; ending with: "How did you escape from the house of Colonel Paul Gregor? What brought you here?"

Wynder explained to the first question, and to the second answered:

"Why, you know you told me, captain, that if we got separated at all, we would meet, eventually, among the ruins of Willowold. So I ran blither as fast as my legs"—here one of his skinny legs night slipped through the open space between the steps near the top—"as my legs would carry me"—recovering himself with a sprawl, and bumping against Crosier.

"Careful—blockhead!"

"All right, captain, I only scraped my shins, that's all."

They noiselessly proceeded along the passage in the direction of the door leading to the vault in which Thadlis was snoring and peacefully unconscious of any likelihood of an attempt on the part of anyone to set free the beautiful captive.

"Furies on our misfortune! he has done as that ruffian advised—the door is locked, and the key gone. We cannot break in, for it will rouse the brute, and he may stab her before our eyes! 'Blood! Oh, for a key!—if we but had a key—ha! what's that I hear?' He heard a slight jingle of keys at his side, and Worth Wynder said:

"We have keys enough, if that is all, captain. Here's the bunch you handed me when you opened the desk. I preserved them, as I did the lantern."

"Good! Excellent! How fortunate! Give them to me! Oh! now then, for my beautiful Elise!"

"Sh! captain."

"Eh? Well?" Wynder's hand had fallen warningly on his shoulder.

"But, look this way, captain."

At the further end of the left hand passage going rearward, which was at their backs, there was a thin streak and a dot of light, as if from the keyhole and door sill of an illumined apartment. It was to this that Wynder had called the attention of Captain Varian Crosier.

"H-o!" exclaimed the latter, in a prolonged way, "still another prowler at the ruins of Willowold. He may be a dangerous foe to us. Let us see who it is."

The two skulked silently toward the light, and presently reached the door, which was not latched; and, pushing the door slightly ajar, they glanced in.

A man knelt on one knee by a candle that was stuck upright in a knot-hole of the floor, but his back was toward them, and his face was hidden. He wore a cape precisely similar to the one Thadlis had captured, and on his head was a hat Crosier could have sworn was his own; in fact, the whole appearance of the kneeling figure, with dark, tangling hair falling over the collar of the cape—was an exact likeness of what Varian Crosier would have presented in the same position.

But what made Crosier's eyes dance malignantly, his hands work convulsively, and his breath come hard, was that he recognized this personage as the man who had recently robbed him; and more, and convincing, there were the letters in a pile beside the flickering candle, while the unsuspecting thief was busily perusing them by turns.

The mysterious party in the black cape and broad slouch hat, appeared to be much excited by the contents of a letter on which his eyes were bent.

Totally unaware of the observation of others, or reckless of the probable intrusion of the one from whom he had stolen the important scrawls, or, perhaps, relying upon his ears to tell him of the approach of any one, he seemed to devour the pages with breathless, eager, joyous interest; and the two who looked in through the crack at the door, heard him murmur, mutter, exclaim:

"Ah, Heaven be thanked! God is just. By this happy accident He has given me the means to find my beloved Elise! Sweet Elise! I shall recover you—as if from the grave, you will come back to my arms, to smile upon me, to dispel the long, long, tedious wretchedness of the last ten years. Then I have wrongly judged her father as a murderer—the man who called himself her father—he did not kill her. But he is a villain, nevertheless. I will go to her—to Elise—and he will never know that I escaped the meshes of Allick Cassin, that I thwarted him, after all. Ha! ha! ha! how sweet! Oh! delicious pleasure. My revenge may sleep when I clasp Elise in my embrace, my own wrongs may stand, I want only her—Elise—my jewel! my jewel!"

"'Blood!" whispered Varian Crosier, to his follower, and his brow was darker than the clouds of the recent storm, while his eyes glared fiercely. "Did you hear what he said?"

He, too, is after Elise De Martine—my beautiful and adored Elise! Hark to the pretty titles: his 'sweet,' his 'jewel,' his 'beloved.' He will clasp her in his arms—delicious pleasure! Ho! I shall tear him to shreds! Who can it be?"

"Who would be searching for this myth beside yourself, captain?" queried Wynder.

"There is but one," glancing daggers into the face of the slim individual.

"And that one is Jules Willoughby."

"Blood and fire! It is Jules Willoughby, the curst apothecary's clerk. His 'sweet'—his 'jewel'—we'll see about that! Make sure of those letters, Worth Wynder. I'll have his life—Ho!" and Varlan Crosier, snapping his teeth together like castanets, bounded into the room.

The first intimation of the attack which the cloaked figure had, was the falling of a heavy body on his back, a terrific blow from a bunch of keys, and the snarl of a deep voice in his ears:

"Jules Willoughby—apothecary's clerk, thief, rival! your doom is sealed!" yelled Crosier, madly.

But, despite the force of the onset, and the demoniac strength of the excited assailant, the figure was not to be so easily overpowered. Exerting his every muscle in one Herculean strain, he rose to his feet, squirmed round with the suppleness of an eel, till he could grasp his foe more evenly. Then he planted one knee in Crosier's stomach, at the same time dealing him a blow in the face that knocked him backward.

But Varlan Crosier was beaten only for one second—in the next he sprung again toward his hated rival in the race after Elise De Martine: for it was Jules Willoughby, and Crosier beheld in the other's face an exact counterpart of his own, the remarkable likeness that caused him to cry out in astonishment and incredulity, as he heard him, when this Jules Willoughby seized upon the letters in the second story room.

We have seen that he half believed Jules Willoughby to be the spirit of his brother, who, as he hinted in his amazed exclamations—was drowned at some point or place, at some time or date about twelve years prior to this eventful night—an item which we shall develop hereafter.

For the present, though, he resolved that it was not his brother, nor his brother's spirit, nor was it anybody but Jules Willoughby, on whose annihilation he was directly bent, because of his former intimacy and existing affection, and evident search, with, for, and after Elise De Martine.

"Accursed Jules Willoughby! you are in my way—you shall die!" he foamed, launching himself tigerishly forward.

Willoughby recoiled a step, to avoid the outstretched hands of his enemy. As he did so, the floor yawned beneath him—he disappeared down a black cavity that opened under his weight.

The encounter had occurred in the first kitchen, under the provision cellar; and the catch of the trap having been rottenness, and the jar proving too much for the frail bolt, the unfortunate man went plunging helplessly downward, grasping wildly at empty air.

Crosier retreated, rubbing his hands in high glee, laughing loud and harsh.

"Hey! where's he gone to?" exclaimed Worth Wynder, who had gained possession of the letters and stood ready to fly.

"Into the provision cellar!" fairly shouted the delighted Crosier. "And see: the ladder was removed, for some purpose, years ago! There is no access save the ventral trap, through which a rat could scarce worm itself! If he is not dead by that fall, then he never can get out! Ho! h—o!" and again he laughed loudly, pointing to the hole.

"Yes, I see," Wynder said, drawing nigh the edge. "The poor fellow has actually consigned himself to his own grave." He was cut short by the reverberating bang of a pistol; a bullet whizzed from below, burying itself in the ceiling.

Wynder's limbs flew up spasmodically, and he fell flat on his back.

"Captain, I'm a dot man!" he screamed.

"Fool! The bullet is in the ceiling—I saw the plaster fall where it struck. But, hark!"

The voice of Jules Willoughby was waiving from the trap:

"Oh, Elise!—Elise! Just when I had found you, when I could come to you and show you that I was alive and faithful to our vows after all these weary years—to be buried thus! Help!—help, there! You will not leave me to die in this place? There is no outlet; it is infernal gloom. Help, or I'll perish! Do not leave me. Hear me up there, whoever you are: what have I ever done to harm you? Why do you seek my life? There is some terrible mistake. I know you not—we never met. Aid me to escape from this grave!"

"The dog is not dead yet!" said Varlan Crosier, in an undertone, who, fearing another shot, kept warily back from the edge of the pit; then he addressed his enemy:

"Ho! but I know you, accursed clerk of an apothecary!"

"Who are you?"

"No matter. I am your enemy, because I have sworn to marry Elise De Martine. I have been ahead of you, and found her. She is in this building—"

"No, you deceive yourself. Elise is far from here, where you dream not of."

"You lie! I tell you she is here, almost within sound of your voice. I am going to her this very minute. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Oh, Elise!—Elise!" shrieked the buried man.

"And you shall remain there to die, to rot, while I hold her in my arms and rain kisses on her lips!" continued Crosier, maliciously, enjoying the torture he knew his words must inflict on his rival. "She has grown twice beautiful in the last ten years—since it was thought that she died by the sting of a silver serpent! She is an angel of loveliness. And she is mine—mine! I will possess her and grow fat on happiness, while you starve in that hole. Ha! ha! ha!"

A series of groans, cries and wails came from below; they could hear him ranting to and fro, pounding the walls with his fists, and leaping upward in vain attempts to grasp the edge of the planks.

"Come, Wynder, we'll go now to my beautiful Elise—my Elise! How easily I am rid of this dangerous rival. Ha! ha! ha!"

"And how I shall have the nightmare, after burying that chap!" thought Wynder, uneasily.

"Adieu, Jules Willoughby; adieu thou miserable apothecary's clerk—ho! adieu, I say, I am going to Elise, your 'jewel,' your 'sweet,' your 'beloved.' How nice! Ha! ha! ha! Come, Wynder, and with the mocking words he left the apartment, followed by Wynder, who closed the door after them to deaden the cries of the man in the pit.

"Shall we leave that candle burning, captain?"

"Yes—no matter; it will sputter out soon. Come on. 'Blood! I am itching with impatience. Ah! here we are'—as they reached the door leading to the front vault—'Turn your lantern on the lock.'"

It was not difficult to select a key for the lock; in a few seconds they were stealthily descending the ladder-way. Thadlis still slept and snored, and they cautiously advanced.

Varlan Crosier took up the pistol which the stabler had placed upon the table, saying:

"Bind his feet with your handkerchief, and his hands with mine—here. I will keep him quiet while you do it, or blow his few brains out. Now then, quick."

He suddenly threw one knee over the chest of the slumbering man, grasped his collar with one hand, and leveled the weapon with the other. The movement aroused Thadlis instantly.

"Hilloah! By Satan! what's this? Off, you hounds!" snorted the startled man.

The pistol barrel pressed his temple, and Varlan Crosier—whose eyes emitted sparks, and whose face lowered like a demon's—hissed in the teeth of the astonished stabler:

"Silence! Move a limb, or a hand, or speak too loud, and, by all the fiends! you die! Do you hear? Twitch so much as one of your lips, and I shall kill you!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 201.)

WILMA WILDE, The Doctor's Ward.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AS IT WAS.

THE last of the dreary November days had worn away. December followed them, and the new year was ushered in.

Mellow lights glowed in the parlor of the old mansion up among the Westmoreland hills. There have been changes there since the eventful night of Wilma's coming in from her walk to the doctor's house. An eventful night, and one when the saddening element held its supremacy, for Miss Erle, holding fast to her nephew's hand, had passed from a light slumber into a sleep which knows no waking, and at the same time, in the little bare cottage in the village, the anxiety which had awakened in the hearts of the watchers there was deepening, with how good cause they afterward knew.

No need ever of the self-sacrifice decided in the heart of each of those widely different, noble men—each prepared to lay down his own best happiness in the peace to her. No more weary burden very soon for Rose; no further need of the marble-like mask, no more ennuï and weariness; no more homage of the fashionable world for Mrs. Richland, noted and quoted for fifteen years!

During those sad days of waiting there was no jealousy and no distrust; no discord of enmity between those two, the husband of those few bright happy weeks of her young life, and the husband of these later years. When all was over, as it was in a brief four days' time, those two found consolation and comfort each in the other.

Miss Erle was laid to rest beside her kindred, in a quiet spot there among her native hills, loved by the villagers, who, failing to appreciate all she had been to them in life, came to a recognition of the full measure of their loss with her death. Another funeral cortege at a later date, an imposing procession, went out from the Western avenue mansion, where the marble remains of that dearly loved wife of two husbands had been conveyed. A white tapering shaft in the Allegheny cemetery marks her grave, and the world is none the wiser for the painful drama of her life.

It is Ethel who sits in the parlor of the old house up in Westmoreland, this evening of the early new year. Miss Erle's will, which was never changed, had left the bulk of her property to Ethel. Besides, there had been some charity bequests, and Erle would not hear to the renunciation which Ethel urged. The house in the city was unbearable with a sorrowful reminder at every turn; and it was Ethel herself who had proposed returning here. Captain Bernham and Wilma were here as well, at Mr. Richland's urgent solicitation. Their mutual grief had resulted in knitting those four more closely than the brightest prosperous friendships ever could have done.

Erle had gone back to Hetherlands, and despite his sincere mourning for his aunt, he was lighter-hearted on his journey than he had been for weeks before. The cause of it had come about most unexpectedly to himself. He had gone into Ethel's presence, one day, as the holidays were drawing close at hand, not shrinking from the duty which prompted him, but with a depression which revealed to himself how futile had been his effort to return the full ardor of his wandering devotion to the allegiance where, in all honor, it should belong. The troussard had arrived and been packed away from sight, in those darker days, and no reference made to their previous plans, until Erle broke the subject, a trifle abruptly, on that occasion.

"It has come to a time when I must speak to you regarding our marriage, Ethel," he had said.

"I leave it entirely to your decision if any change shall occur in our plans. It seems ill-advised to be speaking of this so soon after a sorrow which has come to us both, but ours has been a quiet, long-standing betrothal, and I think it is your brother's wish that there shall be little as possible deviation from our first arrangement. It is my desire as well, and I do not also agree, we will still be married plainly and privately, upon New Year's Day."

There was a troubled light in the soft, hazel eyes, as Ethel heard him, but the pure fair face was quiet in its resolve.

"There must be a change in our plans, Erle—one of which I have been wishing yet dreading to speak to you. I scarcely know how to tell you, even now. This great grief of Gertrude's death, and the knowledge of all she had borne, has shocked me to a comprehension of the great wrong I might have done us both. I do not love you with the love I should hope to bear my husband, Erle; I know now that I never can. I would be doing a great wrong to marry you at all. Howard is needing me, too, and my duty, the gratitude and love I owe him in return for long years of watchful tenderness, is to devote myself to him from this time forth."

Erle made no monstrosity, pleaded strongly even while his heart beat quick at thought of regained freedom; but Ethel remained firm. And so, at last, he had accepted his dismissal at her hands, and gone back to Hetherlands. He had spoken no word to Wilma. She was so deeply under the cloud yet, her first duty was owing yet to the father, who for so long a time had been bereft of wife and child. He could be content, he thought, with this measure of light-heartedness which had come to him—contented to wait a fitting time to tell his love again to Wilma.

Ethel, sitting alone, the firelight playing over the somber mourning dress she wears, the glow from the chandelier lighting the bright hair and the pearl-like face, is thinking sadly but not gloomily of the many changes. There will be still another one when spring opens. They have made all calculations for a pack-trail journey—her brother, Captain Bernham, Wilma and herself. Her brother's failing

health is the first object prompting the move, and it will be better for all of them to be removed from the associations of these familiar scenes. She is recalling some vague reminiscence of that other European tour, her brother's wedding-tour, when she was a very little child, as the door opens and she looks up and rises with a slight cry as, with quick step, there advances to meet her—Justin Lenoir. She has thought him gone to his new field of action before this, and his sudden appearance is a surprise from which she does not recover at once. There is something which is not embarrassment, but an eager excitement kept down as he holds her hand for a moment and utters those commonplace which people always use in greeting. She remarks her surprise and wonder, and he answers her. His book has delayed him. It is just out now, and he has his first assurance of its success. She has always been sure that it would succeed, and says so now; and it is a truth that he finds as much delight in her simple faith as with the favorable reviews with which the critics have seen fit to receive it.

"I shall be ready to go within another week," he said; "and this encouragement I have met has resulted in placing me better even than I should have gone without seeing you again except for a recent chance meeting with Mr. Hetherville. (That chance meeting had cost Erle more trouble and maneuvering than either of them was ever to know.) Oh, Ethel, Ethel! I know that you are free of your own accord, and I dare to plead for myself what your heart withheld from him. I have loved you since we first met, up in the mountains, and I never could school myself quite to be reconciled at thought of ever losing you. It is asking much now and offering so little except my love, but if you can trust to that I shall be the most blessed of men; I shall strive to gain much for your sake as I never could have striven alone for my own advancement."

Ethel, finding her hand clasped in his again, saying not a word, did not resist when he drew her blushing, happy face down to his shoulder. "My darling, my darling!" he repeated, accepting all that the concession from her meant. "My only love, and you were my love at first sight. Did you know that, Ethel? Tell me, my own, when did you know first that you could care like this for me?"

"When I met you first, pale and worn by overwork, lost sleep among the mountains," she answered, truthfully.

Mr. Richland was less surprised than Ethel had expected he would be when the announcement of this result was made known to him. The old pride, which had always been his worst fault, had been humbled. In its place had come a softer, better sentiment, which shone pre-eminently bright at what might have been a little lingering, concealed disappointment to him even now. But he had had his lesson, bitterly hard, and he was not lacking in approval of Ethel's choice.

The marriage was decided to take place in early spring, and the time between, seemingly flew away upon lightning wings. Lenoir was assured of obtaining leave of absence from his new situation, which he retained at his own and Ethel's desire, notwithstanding Mr. Richland's urgent representation that such a course was unnecessary, since Ethel and Ethel's husband should share equally of his bounty, but the young people were firm in declining his generosity.

"Justin has his own way to work out," Ethel said, with a glance which showed how entire her belief was that he would make it. "You must not spoil his chances by depriving him of a chief incentive, Howard."

Their plans had been changed only this far, that Ethel should return with her husband after a brief two months, leaving the remainder of the tourist party to their own time and their own pleasure, and the other side of the ocean.

It was to be a very quiet marriage. An invitation was dispatched to Erle to be present upon the occasion, and a half dozen hours after the letter containing it had been mailed, he came in upon them unexpectedly.

"—almost."

"You see the power of attraction was too strong for me," he declared laughingly; and then heard with real pleasure the tidings he had crossed on the way.

Later that same day he succeeded in finding Wilma alone, and before she could even suspect his intention he had caught the slender little form close in his arms, his rippling golden beard swept across her dusky hair, and his bold, blue eyes looking down upon her caused her own shy, soft, dark ones to fall, me gazes.

"Hetherville, for name! I am—let me go," "You shall never, never go," he answered her. "Nevertheless you have promised to be my own loved, cherished wife. I don't exact any promise of your loving me," he laughed. "I am very sure of that already. Guileless little heart, it could not conceal the truth from me. I have your father's consent, Wilma. My own little love! Can you and will you be happy with me?"

"Dear Erle, so happy that I am frightened. There was a double wedding of course. Crayton was there and ate of the cake, and drank the health of the two young pairs, and was the wild, reckless Bohemian even under his forced good behavior of the day. He is that still, one of those talented men of good impulses and bad habits, who, with versatile ability, will never achieve a point in life. As such, let us leave him, for there are sure to come darker hours and worse recklessness before he is done with life in the true Bohemian way."

THE END.

ONE-ARMED ALF, The Giant Hunter of the Great Lakes.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"BOAT, AHOY!"

"THE Maid of Michigan—the Specter Skiff—is it possible, possible that I am—ay, it is even so, I am aboard that strange, mysterious craft!"

Thus Darcy Mayfield mused to himself as he stood erect in the little schooner, mystified and dumfounded with his two sleeping, silent captors at his feet. He could scarcely believe the evidence of his own senses in the very face of staring facts. He could see that the craft was skimming over the water at a rapid speed, but whether he was being carried to safety or death he knew not. He was not a coward by any means, yet he made no move toward changing the boat's course, nor toward arousing his sleeping captors whose sleep seemed unusually deep and silent.

But, as the moments wore away and the Englishmen stirred not, something like a feeling of terror and desolation crept over him—a feeling of awe which one experiences when he enters alone the death-chamber, or some old, eerie, haunted house. This he tried to shake off as a sudden fear, but he could not. It grew upon him, and at length he approached his captors, bent down and peered into their faces,

He started back with a low exclamation of horror. He saw that the eyes of one of the Englishmen were staring wide open with a vacant, glassy expression, while upon the forehead of the other one he could just see a small, round hole from which the blood was welling and making a scarlet path across the face. In fact, he saw that both were stone dead, yet reposing in attitudes calculated to mislead one into the belief that they were simply asleep.

A chill of horror now crept over young Mayfield's frame, and conjured up fearful thoughts in his mind. The pistol-shot and groans that he had heard in his dreams, were, after all, realities—stern facts; and he knew not how soon his own fate might be sealed. In fact, the terrible suspense under which he was now placed was agony itself to which the repulsive presence of the dead added additional horrors. From the one he could seek no relief, but the latter he could. This was by consigning the bodies of the dead to the dark waters beneath him, and this he at once proceeded to do, and in a minute's time the bodies were buried beneath the waves of the great lake.

Darcy Mayfield now seated himself, and although his little easier in mind, he could bony the freer.

The boat was skimming along at a rapid speed, the little sail being pressed to its utmost. The night was still one of gloom and mist—damp, ghostly and dismal. Not a sound could be heard save the dull swash of the water as it closed upon the wake of the craft.

Darcy settled down upon his seat, resolved to consign himself calmly to fate, and lulled by the easy, gliding motion of the craft, he sunk into a kind of mental stupor. But from this he was suddenly aroused by a sound resembling the dip and swash of oars, and gazing around him he discovered a long boat, filled with shadowy forms, creeping through the fog toward him, and before he could make out the occupants, clear and distinct on the dismal air, a voice rung out:

"Boat ahoy!"

"Ay, ay," responded our hero, with a promptness that was evidence of his quick perception and decision.

"Halt!" returned the party in the strange boat; "who goes there?"

"A boat of our Royal Majesty of England," replied Darcy Mayfield.

"You lie, curse you," replied the challenger; "you are a loping Yankee—halt, or we'll riddle you with English bullets."

Mayfield heard the demand and threat, and even had he been disposed to obey the order he could not have done so, for he held no control over the little barque that glided swiftly on.

The next instant a dozen tongues of fire were vomited out from the sides of the English boat, and the report of musketry stirred the fog around them.

Darcy saw the flash; he heard the report and the whistle of bullets around him; he felt a sharp, stinging sensation about the head, then he sank down in the boat and all became a blank to his mind.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HANNAH, THE MAID OF MICHIGAN.

WHEN Darcy Mayfield recovered from that state of unconsciousness into which he had been thrown by a musket-ball grazing his head, the first thing of which he became conscious was of a severe pain in the head, and his thoughts were so confused that he could not define his situation nor the cause of his semi-consciousness. Little by little, however, he regained his mind, then one by one he recalled the events of the past down to the time he was hailed and fired upon by the English boatmen.

But where was he now? This is the question that puzzled his feverish brain. He gazed around him. It was broad daylight. He could see the clear, blue sky overhead, and he could feel a gentle swaying motion of his couch. Then a sound caught his ear. He lifted his eyes and saw a white sail outspread above him. Then another truth flashed across his mind: he was still aboard the reputedly haunted skiff.

With this discovery he attempted to rise to a sitting posture, but found that he was too weak, and he sank back into his seat he clasped his aching brow. He started—a bandage was upon his head. Some unknown friend had placed it there—had dressed his wound and cared for him while unconscious. This discovery gave him hope and strength, and by a renewed effort he succeeded in rising once more to a sitting posture. He then gazed around him; a vast, illimitable sheet of water stretched its unbroken length away on every side. Not an object was visible upon it, and he was alone in the craft. Where, then, was the friend who had dressed and bandaged his wound? Let me go! Weak with the loss of blood, and unnerved by the constant excitements of his surroundings, he again sunk down into a state of semi-consciousness. But he was soon aroused again by the electric thrill of a soft, gentle hand passing over his aching, burning brow. He opened his eyes and was startled by sight of a female figure bending over him. But to his surprise her face was covered with a veil, or mask, through which gleamed a pair of bright eyes, now beaming down upon him. She was no spirit, that was evident—but a being in the flesh, with a form beautiful and sylph-like in its proportions. A wealth of blue-black hair streamed in rippling masses down over the rounded shoulders and swelling bosom. Hands with small, tapering fingers and of snowy whiteness, were fluttering about his feverish brow, every touch sending a magnetic thrill through his whole frame.

"At last I have obtained a sight of my deliverer's form, at least," Darcy, under the impulse of the moment found strength to remark.

"I am not your deliverer, young stranger, for you are not safe yet," replied the masked maiden, for from the soft, flute-like notes of her voice, the grace and ease of her movements, and the symmetrical beauty of her form it was evident that she was a young person.

"Not safe yet?" exclaimed Darcy.

"No; your health is in a feeble condition; besides, we are leagues from land, and the lake is swarming with English boats."

As she spoke young Mayfield bent a strong, searching gaze upon her, like one awakening from a sleep filled with haunting dreams. There was something strangely familiar in the woman's tone; it seemed like an echo from the dead past. But his mind was still too unsettled to connect the past with the present, or to fix the identity of his friend and protectress; and seeing that she was desirous of keeping that identity a secret from him, he said:

"I am satisfied, then, that you are a friend, good lady; and yet you are a stranger to me, and it is evident from your being masked that you desire to remain unknown."

"That's true, sir," she replied, softly; "nevertheless, there is one thing I do not object to your knowing. I suppose you have heard of the Specter Skiff, and the Maid of Michigan?"

"I have."

"You are now aboard of that craft, and I am the Maid of Michigan."

"I suspected as much," replied Darcy; "yet there are those who believe the Maid of Michigan is but a spirit."

"Indeed?" replied the maiden, and a low,

musical laugh rippled in weird-like softness from her lips. "I am glad, very glad that people think so, and it would have been well for some to have kept clear of the Specter Skiff when they found it without occupants."

A faint shudder convulsed Darcy's form at these words, for he knew that she had reference to the death of his two English captors, Kruler and Belden, and he could assign their death to no other hands than hers.

"It may be possible," continued the woman, seeing he did not speak, "that we will journey together some length of time, for your health is in a feeble condition. You bled almost to death last night from the wound you received from the Englishmen and are quite reduced in strength, so I shall not desert you until you are able to take care of yourself. Therefore you can call me Hannah, and rest assured that I am the best friend living."

"Best friend living!" exclaimed Darcy, with trembling lips, at the same time closing his eyes as if to shut out some painful mental light.

"Yes; your best friend living, Walter Garfield."

A low exclamation burst from Darcy's lips as the woman pronounced this name. He struggled to his feet by a desperate effort and bent his gaze upon the maiden—not upon her either, but upon the place where she had stood, for Hannah, the Maid of Michigan, had vanished from the boat as if by magic.

"Oh, Heaven!" groaned Darcy, in agony of spirit; "tell me she is not a spirit come with that voice to haunt my soul!" And then he sunk down, his brain wild with a consuming fire.

CHAPTER XIX.

A RETROSPECT.

WE beg the reader will bear with us while we break aside from the main thread of our story and go back three years beyond the date of which we have been writing, to narrate an incident which eventually culminated in many of the scenes and transactions already described.

On a pleasant evening of the summer of 1809 two men were seated in an elegantly furnished room of a residence in Montreal, Canada, engaged in stormy conversation. One of them was an elderly man, the other young, not more than twenty years of age. The former was a person upon whose face was stamped the signet of an evil heart and dissipated habits; while the latter was directly the opposite not only in age but in the expression of features and general character.

"It is no use talking, Sir Joshua Pellington," the young man was saying when we introduce them to the reader, "I have given you my answer, and from it there is no appeal."

"But there is, Master Imbercourt," replied the elderly man addressed as Sir Joshua Pellington; "you should remember, sir, that you are a minor and I am your guardian, as well as Maria Bradbury's, and that the law of England gives me entire control of you and your property."

"That may all be, Mr. Pellington, but the law does not say who you shall select for my wife."

"I know it, Robert, but see here; by wedding your cousin, Maria Bradbury, you will unite two large English estates and re-establish the name and power of the Imbercourts."

"I care not a fig for the name. I have sworn allegiance to the American government, and I will never set foot on England's shores again. I despise that country. From there was my father banished because he dared express his opinion on the justification of the American Government in seeking redress for the injuries sustained by our commerce from English cruisers on the high seas. Moreover, I would not marry the cousin of which you speak, because I never saw her; besides, I understand she is married already to one Walter Garfield."

"That would make no difference, Robert; Garfield could be—"

"I understand you, Pellington," interrupted the youth, hotly; "you would murder Garfield to accomplish an end that would gratify your unscrupulous cupidity."

"Don't be too rash, Master Robert Imbercourt; I did not say I would murder Garfield, but if you will consent to marry Maria, he shall not stand in your way."

"No; you will murder him."

"Well, let me hear your decision?"

"You have it already. I will marry no one, God willing, but Hellice Arvine."

"A poor, plebeian American girl!" sneered Sir Joshua Pellington.

"Be careful, Josh Pellington, how you sneer at Hellice Arvine, or by the heaven above me, I will kill you!" the youth exclaimed, his eyes blazing fire.

"Robert," the villain finally remarked, "you are most too hot-headed to talk to-night. Go back to your hotel, think this matter all over, and to-morrow I will call and see you."

Young Imbercourt sprung to his feet, and snatching his hat from the table, left the room. Scarcely had the door closed upon him when the door of an adjoining apartment opened, and a tall, burly looking man entered.

"The boy is still stubborn as a mad bull," said the man.

"Yes, major, we are now forced to the last extremity, and force must be employed to effect our plans. I am determined that Robert Imbercourt shall marry Maria Bradbury. According to the will of their parents, this unites the two houses, which are worth a quarter of a million pounds each, and at their death, I will become heir to all; and I will see that they do, Major Mackelogan, at your hands!" and the expression of a demon overshadowed the man's face.

"Ha! ha! Sir Josh. You are a tenacious dog, and should win through perseverance. But what course do you think of pursuing now?"

"Capture Rob Imbercourt and Maria Bradbury and carry them in my ship to England, where I will imprison them upon some good pretext until they comply with my wishes."

"Just so; but you may have some trouble in getting Maria Bradbury, or rather Maria Garfield."

"They reside in the settlement not far from old Fort Duquesne, and my plan is for you to take about one hundred Ojibways and sweep across the border in the night, and bring the girl, dead or alive."

"The plan is a perfectly feasible one, Sir Josh; and in consideration of the two thousand pounds promised, all things working out right, I will take the Ojibs, and make the attack whenever desired."

"Give me your hand on that, Mackelogan," said Pellington, rising to his feet and grasping his tool and confederate's hand; "to-morrow night I will have everything ready to leave Montreal and begin the work."

"All right, Sir Josh, all right. I'll be ready too. But, would it not be well to capture Imbercourt while he is in the territory?"

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We may add that this, in reality, is the prelude to "Injun Dick; or, The Death-Shot of Shasta," which has long been promised. It has grown on the author's hands as a kind of necessity, as illustrating, in all truth, not alone the wild, peculiar social condition of the Pacific slope but the wonderful character of the wonderful man who is its her.

Our Arm-Chair.

A Boy's Sermon.—Whether or not the following is original we can not say; but, being like Franklin's Almanac—good for all latitudes and longitudes—we give it, and say: "Boys—cut it out, paste it in your hats, and read it every morning before the day's work commences!"
"Readers of the SATURDAY STAR JOURNAL: A word with you! Have you made up your mind to commence a new year of your life? to forsake the folly of your ways and be a man? Have you made good resolutions for the future? If so, keep them, and my word for it you will never regret it!
"Do you wish to have friends around you, a happy home and loving children to bless you, a true wife that will be rich in the possession of such a husband? Then make good resolves and keep them!
"Look at that poor, feeble old man that you see in the streets of your great city. He is homeless, friendless, childless; no one to give him a word of welcome. He has spent the best of his days in folly. If you would not be like him, keep the good resolutions you have made for the new year. Be a man! Say—I will reform me of my bad habits and vices! Try it for one year and the battle of life is won.
"Keep in good company—avoid dram-shops. Let your leisure hours be spent in reading good books and papers that will give you knowledge of what the world is doing.
"So, once more I beg of you let this New Year be the turning point of your life. No matter what you have to overcome, keep straight ahead; never look back, and with God's help you will prosper, and your country will speak well of you.
"From your friend and well-wisher,
"WILL LEVINGSTON."
Chat.—Among the correspondence marked "personal," which drifts in upon the editor's table, is this:
"I am deeply in love with a girl near my own age, but she is rich and I am poor, and I fear to go any further in my courting of her, for her father won't consent to her marrying a man without money. I can't give her up, and I am certain she don't want me to; but, what else can I do?"
Here is a story for you, young faint-heart: "In Mendon, Vt., a deeply enamored youth recently received permission to 'speak to my father.' He did speak. He stated to the old gentleman that as to this world's goods he was incapable of making much of a show. But with a truly commendable presence of mind, he immediately added that he was 'chock full of day's work.' A young man with sense enough to make such a statement, and to make it in that way, commended himself to the fatherly heart. He got the girl."
We hope you see the point. A father, anxious for the welfare of his daughter, puts a high valuation on good character and *vim*. Show the rich man that you have both, and you'll doubtless get the girl! Remember too that "faint heart never won fair lady."
—We heard of a doctor, the other day, who averred that he had not lost a single patient in nine years, where he had been called in time. Careful investigation revealed the fact that he hadn't had nine patients in nine years! This is the way with boosters generally. The men who assume the responsibilities and sustain large trusts are never heard bragging over their own virtues and successes; they leave that public exhibition of egotism to those who otherwise would

remain in unappreciated insignificance. A booster almost without exception is lacking in the very quality which he claims to have in excess, and the shrewd reader of human nature is never at a loss to determine the probable value of a brag. If this could be comprehended by that class of persons of both sexes who are eternally scolding their own praises and exalting the merits of their own blood, we should have and hear less of them—much to society's relief.—This is meant for nobody in particular, however personal it may seem. We are sure none of our readers will know any person in their village or town at whom it appears to be aimed.
—A friend writing from Indiana, says:
"I did intend trying to get up a club for you here, but there has been an agent here for the —, a miserable Chicago paper, with a flaming premium picture, and he has gloomed the field just now. Don't you go to giving pictures; I almost lose respect for the papers who do, and certainly lose good opinion for the more picture the paper generally. I think people will soon get enough of the said —, and then I'll see what I can do."

That's just about it—"the more picture the less paper." How can publishers give away a picture to each subscriber, if the picture is worth anything? They can not, unless the paper is not worth its price of subscription; in which event the money in the picture had better be put in the paper. We have no "chromos" to give away as a substitute for value in the JOURNAL. If readers don't find our paper cheap enough at three dollars per year, or one dollar for three months, why—go and take some other weekly that gives a five-dollar (!) "chromo" to every three-dollar subscriber! Of course the "chromo" may not be worth, intrinsically, five cents; but then, you see, it's thrown in; and, being thrown in, how can you expect the paper to be worth three dollars?

BORROWING.

Don't borrow trouble. Enough of it comes to visit us in its own time without our anticipating its appearance. It is full time to worry over our grievances when they do come, and it's folly and foolishness for us to moan over what may take place. Let us keep up brave hearts and go along cheerfully and courageously through life, hoping and believing that our lot is to be a pleasant one, but, should it turn out contrary to our expectations, it will then be in order to trouble ourselves, although, even then, 'twould be better to bear the grievance manfully and thank Providence that the trouble is no worse.
What comfort can any person obtain by thinking the future is going to be dark—that the "ills that flesh is heir to" will surely visit him? Not one bit, not one atom! It will only serve to make that poor soul worry, and worry almost always brings misery in its train. It's distressing to hear people worry and borrow trouble, and it would puzzle Socrates himself to discover any pleasure in the melancholy occupation.
Ugh! What kills joys these "pestiferous" "trouble borrowers" are, with their doleful visages and whining accents! They believe the future is all dark to them, and they appear to want to prophesy it so for everybody else; they endeavor to crush out all our ambition to accomplish good ends, and endeavor to dissuade us from our pursuits by their discouraging remarks.
The best way to silence these bugbears is to pay no attention to them, and keep your mind the motto: "Never trouble trouble till trouble troubles you."

Don't borrow newspapers—at least don't borrow mine; be independent and possess one or two of your own, and, if you "do want to find out so much how that splendid serial in the weekly literary paper is going to turn out," subscribe for the periodical by the year, or purchase a copy at the news stand on publication day. If you borrow a paper, nine chances out of ten if you don't forget to return it when you have read it, or let it lie around the house among the dust until it is in no fit condition to return. When publications are so cheap it seems as though no one need be at the necessity of borrowing, and thus keep money out of the treasury of the publishers.
"Takes all your money for necessities," you say? My very good friend, didn't you know that a good paper is one of the necessities of life? If you didn't have that information before, I give it to you now, hoping you will profit by the same. A good paper gives as much food to the mind as do meats and groceries to the body, and—in these days—we want both mind and muscle; the former we can not have without good papers, and good papers we can not have if all want to be borrowers and none are purchasers. Subscribe for the paper and you will benefit yourself, the publishers and other subscribers, for the more money the publishers receive the more are they enabled to lay out for your entertainment and amusement.
Don't borrow money. Settling day may be far distant, but it must surely come at last. Perhaps I ought to modify my words a trifle by saying—don't borrow money, if you can possibly help it. There are many who borrow who have no prospect of ever paying the amount loaned them, and that has ever appeared to me to be a swindling operation. If you can keep out of debt do so by all means, for you'll not have the horrors of expecting bills due at certain times, and worrying for fear life how you are going to meet them. To those whose credit is good, and who are able and prompt to repay all the money they borrow, I cannot see harm in asking their neighbor for a little help in time of need. But when you do incur a debt don't you rest quietly until you have tried every honest means in your power to liquidate it.
Don't borrow ideas when writing for the press; use your own, and if you haven't any, don't write at all. If you must use other's ideas, strive to improve on them if you can, or put them in a clearer and more practicable light; but don't, for mercy sake, borrow other people's articles and pass them off as your own; that's plagiarism, and I consider that to be about as mean and contemptible a piece of business as you can perform. I'd rather encounter a snake any day than a plagiarist. Catch me giving house-room to such "varmints." No, I thank you, I am not at home, to any being of that sort, and wish that every literary thief was punishable with a stripe on the bare back. That's the way I feel toward those specimens of humbuggery—only a trifle harsher.

OBSTINACY AND UNCHARITABLENESS.
It is a very good thing to be tenacious of truth and careful of one's promise, but there are people in the world who, when they have said no or yes, would not be shaken from the position they have taken by the abrupt opening of the millenium. To them their simple word is the law which should move the universe. If they were incantations to assert that the moon was green cheese, they would expect some wonderful chemical action to bring about the transformation and make their word good. They are selfish of course; your people with isms and hobbies are always that. The are so bound to their own narrow little sphere, they are blind to all good lying beyond it. They are your candid men who never find a difficulty in saying No to a request; they never ask a favor and they never grant one, for that would be to turn a little to one side or the other of the chalkline which guides their precise feet. They are the original "I told you so's," that shake their head dolorously over every human error that may bring down a man and brother. They never wander from the sternest morality, they could have shown the result sure to follow from the first wrong move, but to go out of their tracks to utter the warning would be a violation of the cardinal principles of their lives infinitely more disastrous than the ruin in morals or matter of a merely ordinary man.
To hear these human mules bray you would suppose them the rulers of the earth rather than common beasts of burden, their heaviest panniers loaded with the weight of their own self-importance and uncharitableness.
There is such a thing as too great yielding to the outside influence that is brought to bear, such a thing as a too good nature imposed upon at every turn, and these are as much above the bottomless pit as the stars are in the firmament. Better a thousand times never to say No even if ingratitude is the return, than to always say it, to hold the hand from real want as well as its brazen counterfeit.
Given men with blood in their veins and warm impulse in their hearts, often directed wrongly though it may be, against war and cold calculation and immovable obstinacy, the one will deal with free open hands, will do for their neighbors as they would be done by through sickness and misfortune and misery, and will leave no stone unturned behind them; the others will talk of poor-houses and hospitals, advising them for the improvident scum who have come to need, holding their purse-strings tight with a morbid fear of themselves arriving at those establishments, yet, should so much as a penny escape. The cause may be bad, but oh, fellow creatures! where there is a chance of giving relief shut not your ears against the cry which comes up from the earth. J. D. B.

Woman's World.

We once before adverted, in this department, to the fitness of the diamond for its supremacy as a woman's gem, and advised all who could to buy that stone in preference to all others.
That advice seemed a mockery to those who could neither now buy nor hope hereafter to obtain the coveted prize; but, dear readers, do you confine your interest to those things only that you can secure?
Of course not! Every woman loves lace of the finest looms, camel's hair shawls, and the elixir of youth even though she never expects to become possessor of either; and so of diamonds.
The history and nature of the gem we are sure will deeply interest our fair readers, as it will inform them why the diamond is now so precious, and is likely to remain the gem par excellence.
That the "weak things of the world shall confound the wise," is well illustrated in the case of the "rarest gem of ray serene"—it requiring many savans and much time before it was definitely ascertained that the dazzling fop and the man who retailed charred wood could both be classed charcoal men; the stock of the one, and the ornaments of the other constituting the same simple substance under different circumstances, viz.: carbon; the one being crystalline, the former not. It had previously been discovered that diamonds could be burnt if intensely heated, a galvanic battery and also an oxygenated gas furnishing sufficient, each of these agents resolving it into carbonic acid gas, the product of pure charcoal when burnt, a proof of the homogeneity of the two.
Diamonds, having powers of transition, and into so varied and accessible a fluid, for carbonic acid gas is exhaled with our breath, inhaled with every decaying vapor, and contained in most animal and vegetable substances; it would naturally be supposed that they might be reformed from their constituent; and such is the case; but so poor are the manufactured articles, they have little or no commercial value, their formation requiring certain physical conditions unattainable by man.
Stones of first water are found in Hindostan in larger quantities than on any other part of the globe, though many are indigenous to Brazil, Borneo, Siberia, South Africa, and some of the islands of Australia. Those of an inferior quality are largely derived from the latter places. Few would take the trouble to "make a note of when found," or pick up the dull-appearing pebble of the third or octahedron form which is the presentment of the primitive crystal when mined from its earthly home on the mountain, or washed out of its river-bed.
The value of the uncut gem consists in color and size, the white or rather colorless outstanding: rose-colored, pea-green, pale-blue, light-yellow, and coal-black following in the order named. Size is measured by carats, four grains comprehending one of these vegetable nomenclatured weights, each carat having a division of sixty-four parts.
To transform the putative pebble into the sunny solitaire, the delicate hand-operation of "cutting" is necessary, this being accomplished through the agency of diamond dust. Some is sprinkled on the stone to be manipulated in the path of a fine steel file, which grinds them together at different points separately, until the form of a model, constantly before the lapidary, is arrived at. Then the surface is polished with fine dust and oil mechanically. Europe excels in the art of cutting, Holland, Germany, Italy, and England achieving particular note on that account.
There are three general styles of cutting, called respectively the pyramidal or brilliant, the spherical or rose, and the plane or table. The pyramidal is the most popular and expensive, because it imposes greater waste, popular and expensive being synonyms when relating to articles of virtu, but this is partly compensated for by increased brilliancy, acquired from the larger refractive power it gives. Divested of its technical terms, the brilliant consists of a double cone, joined at the base, with both points cut off, one shorter than the other, and numerous facets ground on its sides.
The "rose" is similar to the above, with the exception of terminating in a broad base; the plane being merely a flat stone, with its corners and edges rounded into "faces."
After the diamond has successfully passed through the inflictions described, unless properly set, the time and labor devoted to its beautification are in a measure lost, an imitation or imperfect stone, finely set, appearing to better advantage than a "first water" gem ill-framed, unless closely compared.
Imitations of the diamond are numerous, some of a silicious compound inviting keen scrutiny even from experts, and none but these should attempt to purchase of other than reputable dealers, whose guarantee is reliable, otherwise a "rose" carat at half value may be found a California or paste "turnip" of double cost. No sure rule by which a novice can discover flaws or detect spuriousness can be stated, long experience and familiarity being the necessary requisites to familiarity, but to the connoisseur specific gravity, brightness and color are insignia of quality; illustrative of which a little incident that occurred in Brooklyn not long ago may not be out of place.
Two gentlemen were riding toward the ferry in an East New York car one morning, when the younger observed, sitting on an opposite seat, a mulatto, poorly attired, who illuminated the day dawn like carburetted sunlight in front of a theater; this effect it was found, when the eye, after awhile, had accustomed itself to the brightness, owed its origin to a huge gem reposing serenely upon his rather indifferently shirt bosom; a sort of sun in a mackerel sky, ominous in rhyme of a storm. Turning to his companion, a jeweler (with one or two "Is as the case may be," he laughingly remarked: "That is paste of the strongest consistency, I suppose."
"Well!" returned the jeweler, glancing sharply mackerel skyward, and speaking loud enough for his wearer to hear, "I'll give ten thousand dollars for it."
"I guess you will," retorted he; "I gave twelve thousand dollars for it."
Neither had seen the other before; nor had the diamond been known by the jeweler.
Of the stones of historical size, the potentates of Europe are possessors of most all, the following being the names of the more celebrated: The Sultan of Matan, 360 carats; the Regent, 135 carats; the Koh-i-noor, 186 carats; the Orloff, 195 carats; the Sanci, 54 carats. The last mentioned has survived adventures enough to merit the onslaught of a Southworth or a Cobb. Nurtured on the breast of a Charles the Bold of Burgundy, from him it passed to the Sanci's, and was christened. It next turns up among the crown jewels of France, assisting at the coronation of Louis the XIV. and Louis XV., and disappearing at the sack of the Tuilleries. Ferdinand VII. of Spain, afterward became its owner, his queen giving it to Godoy, Prince de la Paix, from whom it passed to several important hands, until a vowed nabob, Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, of Bombay, secured it by purchase for \$100,000.

Foolscap Papers.

My Ship of War.

DURING the late Virginian flurry, and in anticipation of a war with Spain, I fitted up a vessel upon my own idea of how a ship of war should be built, at my own expense, and intended that I should command it myself; therefore I was particular how it was built.
This vessel is three hundred feet long, and fifty feet broad, and is plated entirely with India rubber, four feet in thickness, so if a ball should be shot at it by a Spanish vessel, it would bounce back with equal force against that vessel and probably crush in the sea.
It is furnished with immense boilers for heating water, and with an engine capable of throwing hot water one mile. The object of this is to scald out any vessel that comes within that distance.
To prevent our masts being shot away I have no masts about the ship; the sails are hoisted on clothes-line poles, so if one is damaged another can be speedily hoisted in its place.
This is a forty-four gun ship. Each ball that is fired is sent to the enemy's vessel, to bore through the sides of the enemy's vessel.
Besides, there is a mortar on board that shoots such large shells they can easily be filled with marines and shot over upon the enemy's deck, fully armed, and the capture of that ship is only a matter of a moment.
In case of a chase, large wings are provided, to be used on each side of the ship, propelled by powerful engines; they might also be used in a retreat if it was necessary.
A cavalry regiment belongs to this ship, furnished with sea-horses procured from late menageries. To see this troop of cavalry galloping over the sea is a sight indeed.
The rudder of this ship is fixed upon an entirely new principle; in case of a pursuit the rudder can be discharged with terrific destruction at the pursuing vessel.
The color of my vessel is so peculiar to the sea that another ship will not discover her until she is close enough to be boarded; and if the other ship hasn't any baggage she won't be boarded at all—the enemy will think it is only a cloud upon the horizon until it is too late.
This vessel goes through the water at the rate of sixteen knots, and several knots that are not knots in one hour—so fast, indeed, that were she to strike the island of Cuba amidst ships, she would split it in two, or any other island. When her crew goes before and pulls her with a rope, her speed is incredible, and five frigates could not catch her.
She is manned with men and not buoyed with boys, and her flag is nailed to the mast, so that it never can be lowered, unless the mast is sawn down, and that would be a difficult job as it is iron-plated.
In every victory its crew will crow a crow that never was crewd.
The ship is decked with a deck upon which no knaves shall tread, and every man shall hold a full hand.
The guns on one side are so bent that a vessel will get both broadsides at once.
On top of the India rubber armor this vessel is silver-plated, but done in such a style that it will not be "taken" anywhere.
It is also built upon such a principle that it will travel under water, and raise up under the other vessel, plunging her plumb into the sea without taking the trouble to get her passenger-list.
It won't contract any engagement with any ship unless it carries more arms than she does, for she considers herself pretty good in a squeeze.
The lower part of this vessel is entirely filled with powder and nitro-glycerine, so if I were to see we were getting the worst end of a battle, and it was nearly up with us, we can lay alongside the enemy, and blow both ships up with great convenience.
My vessel is so constructed that if she is captured she will sail right along as ever, without the trouble of turning her over again. This makes her the handiest vessel afloat. N. B.—The inventor has fully complied with the law, and no infringements on this patent will be allowed.
You observe I call this ship a "she," from the fact she is not a man-of-war, but a woman-of-war.
Every marine is iron-clad from head to foot with four-inch mail, so if a cannon-ball strikes him he would not mind it a particle.
WASHINGTON WHITEHORN,
Rear Admirable.

Readers and Contributors.

To CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepared in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future review.—Usual MSS. promptly returned, but when stamps accompany them, and when, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permitted, except by package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not returned or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. The Commercial Note size paper is most convenient to editors and contributors, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by us implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unsuitable to us are sent worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find it convenient to send their MSS. to the publisher. Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.
We shall have to place the following on the list of declined contributions. A rejection by no means implies want of merit. We must, of necessity, return many things worthy of use because we can not find room for them. We always regret not being able to accept of them, where stamps have been inclosed for such return: "Seth Warren's Fort," "The Old Rush Seller," "A League of Ice," "The Dead Messenger," "A Woman's Forgiveness," "The Three Loves," "Arkansas Ben," "A Tiger in Trouble," "The School-master's Ennemy," "Mrs. Jones," "Our Uncle's Hair," "A Wife's Revenge."
We place on the accepted list: "Lines to My Fair," "Hatty's Valentine," "Queen Gertrude's Past," "Hunt Whodunnit," "The White Dress," "My Prince," "Almost a Ruin," "Ben Howard's Adventure," "A Texas Horse-race."
Have returned the poem, "The Lost Picture."
C. PEASE. Already have answered your query.
A. C. H. Have written you, declining the novel.
JOS. E. B. Three sketches were accepted; one was returned.
E. C. A. Dexter's time, we believe, was 2.16. It has been taken by Mr. Bonner's young horse "Starline."
E. P. M. The author named is now following dramatic writing and managing.
J. G. P. Poe may be very reliable as a critic, but his criticisms on his contemporaries afford the best study in the English language of the art of poetry and other properties of expression. You, evidently, are yet too inexperienced to write for the press.
When Willie E. T. sends a copied story to a paper, as original, and asks pay for it, he must be in a fair way for the poor-house. Such a beginning don't promise well.
BEN ARDEN. It is quite likely your own estimate of your own productions will not be accepted by editors. The poet who is at once author and critic is doomed to obscurity—unless, like Swinburne, he really has great original merit, and is assuredly not a good one for the horse-power engine. If you don't fancy the editor's opinion of your verses don't send them no more to him. That will punish him severely, perhaps.
JANE. Cousins do marry, and there is no good reason why they should not save that of consanguinity. If they are wholly unlike in temperament, consanguinity offers no bar. Some of the noblest families in the world constantly intermarry with cousins, and the marriage of Rothschild is very rich in this observance. One of the great bankers married his niece, and his children were nobly bred.
HARRY R. J. You are mistaken. The word *ecrole* does not mean merely an admixture of colored blood and white in a man or woman. It is, in fact, an adjective, which signifies a mixture of white and colored blood applied to people, but to animals, as *ecrole* beef and *ecrole* mutton; and we have even heard of *ecrole* soda-water, in contradistinction to the imported variety from England. All the white people, therefore, are white *ecroles*, and the black people are black *ecroles*, only in respect to the colony (or State) they are born in, and not to the rest of the world. Louisiana *ecroles* are a singular admixture of Spanish, French and English. There is little or no negro or Indian blood in the race.
YORNO EXAMINER.
To ascertain the exact height of a tree or steeple, by the shadow cast upon the ground, thus: set a stick upright (let it be perpendicular by the plumb-line). Measure the length of the shadow of the stick. As the length of its shadow is to the height of the stick, so is the length of shadow of the tree or steeple to its height. For instance, if the stick is four feet high, and its shadow is six feet in length, and the shadow of the tree is ninety feet, the height of the tree will be sixty feet (6:4::90:60). In other words, multiply the length of the shadow of the tree or steeple by the height of the stick, and divide by the shadow of the stick.
BADGER BEN. The origin of the word turn-out arose from the Duke of Savoy, who was wont to wear a black cloth lined with white, so that he might present either side to whichever party of Spaniards or French held a temporary ascendancy, during the wars of these rival powers.
L. A. C. If you would prevent wooden pallets from becoming water-soaked, give them three coats of copal varnish upon the inside, before they are used. The varnish taste will be gone in a few days.
SHELL-GATHERER. Shells can be whitened by putting them in a jar containing a solution of chloride of lime. After they are taken out let them dry well, and then wash them in clear water, wiping them with a flannel dipped in olive oil to give them a gloss. The shell-cleaners use a weak solution of nitric acid on the outside, to get rid of the increased dirt; but the acid is a rapid dissolver of lime, and can only be used with care.
S. A. LAWRENCE. Do not burn wet, or even damp coal in your stoves or grates. Also, avoid using goodforn coal, cinders and cokes. Dampened coal burns better, or livelier, for the combustion is increased by it.
GARDENER. Yes. Evergreens, as well as fruit-trees, can be successfully pruned, and at almost any time of the year, though early spring is the best season. Prune your grapes in February.
MASTICA C. A new style of trimming black silk dresses is to slash the dress with the finger and thumb, and velvet, a la Hussar. Buttons, also of velvet, can then be put on a la Militaire.
SUZIE N. Fringe your sashes at the ends with lace, and, as has heretofore been the case, wear them in a bow, but loop in graceful folds upon the left side.
VESTA V. A recipe we have found good for pudding is: one quart Indian meal, one cup molasses, one cup sugar, one quart hot water, mix all together; steam for three hours, and eat with sauce.
A. WATT. You can make an excellent stamping ink by dissolving white glue in concentrated glycerine at a heat, and add a sufficient quantity of blue or green, and thickening the whole with enough finely-powdered gum-arabic to bring it to the proper consistency.
MOTHER. To cure sore throat, take the whites of two eggs instead of if the stick is four feet high, and its shadow is six feet in length, and the shadow of the tree is ninety feet, the height of the tree will be sixty feet (6:4::90:60). In other words, multiply the length of the shadow of the tree or steeple by the height of the stick, and divide by the shadow of the stick.
HOUSEKEEPER. To make good coconut pound-cake, grate one large coconut; then take one pound sugar, half a pound butter, six eggs, three fourths of a pound of flour. Mix well together, and bake quickly.
COUNTRY LASS. Stomachers are revived this season in the form of heavily-banded breast-plates, either in steel or jet, and can be worn either with walking or evening dresses.
MISS BERTHA. Make your dress up of navy blue, as it is not only a fashionable material, but greatly worn, and more admired than any other style of dress-goods.
ELLA WASHINGTON. Alam, or violet, is a good set color, red, green, yellow, as we already have said. One spoonful of *sal-soda* will bleach a kettle of clothes; but, as we once before have remarked, it rots the fabric, so never use *sal-soda*.
MRS. HOUSEWIFE. Green should be the prevailing color for bed hangings and window drapery, though other colors are suitable; could you not have your yellow ones dyed?
YOUNG MISS. The latest style of corsets worn in Paris are not much more than a wide belt, being only five inches at the back, and four in the front; the lacing is also most simple, and is never so far from the natural than the old style that has been the cause of placing many a young girl in an early grave.
MARY LAMB. Rub soap upon the hinges of your doors and it will stop the creaking. This is very desirable to remember when there are sick or nervous people in the house.
WINNIE A. The high-heeled, crooked and fast-looking French shoes are not the thing. It is pity that they ever were worn, for they were admired only by quack doctors.
Who will, with delight,
Not far in the future their practice all right,
For disease of the limbs, spine and so forth.
As women hobbled along, a contemptuous sight.
COYNE HANCOCK. If you can not get first, procure for your little girls muffs made of blue Lyons velvet, lined with blue silk, and with bows of the same colored ribbon.
MRS. W. L. Fruit cake that will keep a year or more, and, like wine, improve with age, can be made as follows: one pound sugar, one pound flour, one pound butter, eight eggs, two pounds raisins, one pound currants, quarter pound citron, table-spoonful molasses, one cup sour milk, teaspoonful soda, spices of any desired kind; mix thoroughly, and bake two hours in moderate oven.
WALTER. To clean your kid gloves, wash your hands thoroughly and then put them on, and wash the kid with a piece of flannel dipped in milk and common yellow soap; rinse with clear water, and let the gloves dry on your hands.
STUDENT. Yes, lightning has been measured most accurately, and one flash lately measured by a French scientist was found to be ten feet and half only long.
Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

MANHOOD CAME BETWEEN.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

The banks on which in youth I strayed
Lie in the distance now;
How oft I watched the waves that played
While breezes fanned my brow.

"Was then, in youth's bright idle days,
I dreamed my future o'er,
Till on the hill the sun's last rays
Would gold both stream and shore.

My sunny days of youth I passed
Upon those banks so green;
Those days could not forever last,
For, manhood came between.

Though long from them I've been away,
My heart to them still clings;
Though far I've roamed I still must say,
Much joy their memory brings.

In dreams, the banks and sturdy trees
Look as they did of yore;
The waves are stirred by every breeze,
And I am there once more!

But oh, not in my boyhood days,
Upon those banks so green;
To dream and watch the sun's last rays,
For, manhood came between!

A Beautiful Icicle.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

SIDNEY REDMAYNE leaned back in the comfortable chintz-covered rocking-chair that occupied a window in his bedroom, thinking what a confounded bore it was, and wondering where all the romance of summer boarding came in.

He had tried it from the first of June at farmer Pike's "boarding-house," where, besides himself, there were only two others, who had been driven from city heats and hard overwork by physicians' orders; a consumptive lawyer, the other a dropsical elderly lady, neither of whom afforded much entertainment.

To be sure, his conveniences were good, thoroughly enjoyable, and at first, for several weeks, he had been content to simply enjoy the novelty of fresh, sweet breezes, shady seats on a grassy sward, the shrill chirp of summer insects, and the light-as-day moonlight.

But now, the tenth of September, even the charm of home-made bread and sweet dairy butter had faded. He was tired of Mrs. Pike's delicious cooking, of Dolly Pike's desserts and her ruddy cheeks and black eyes, that had afforded quite an innocent diversion when he first cultivated them.

This morning, sitting in a weary state of extreme ennui, attired in a spotless suit of white linen, laundered in Dolly's best style, Mr. Sidney Redmayne was wondering what he should do with himself to kill time until the first of October, for he had solemnly promised not to return to the city and work a moment earlier.

He had regained even more than his usual strength and vitality; he looked well and handsome—he always did that—and he was so disgusted with laziness, rustication, the country in general, and with being so long away from the light of Ida Chester's eyes in particular.

And, come to get at the kernel of this nut, all the trouble was just here. Moonlight nights with Ida Chester on his arm as they rambled along the country side would be very much pleasanter than enjoyed alone on the little black piazza, or a row in the little canoe down the shady side of the brook, with Ida leaving over the side, dipping her pretty hand in the dimpling water—wouldn't that be the perfection of existence for a long, dreamy August afternoon?

And then, after fully half an hour's worth of such delightful thoughts, Sidney Redmayne sprang from his chintz-covered chair—designed originally for his invalidship—with almost an imprecation on his handsome mouth.

"What a consummate fool I am! wasting my time sitting here and dreaming of a girl whose aristocratic blood would instantly turn skyward at the mention of my name!"

The only girl he ever saw who had occasioned him a second thought. A second thought! he had only thought of her once; one long, long bitter-sweet memory ever since the night he saw her, radiant and peerlessly beautiful in her matchless toilette of white lace, with dashes of lightest blue that contrasted so exquisitely with her fair complexion, her sea-shell-pink cheeks, her violet-hued eyes.

He had met her often, for, even in the very exclusive circles in which Ida Chester reigned supreme, Sidney Redmayne was a frequently solicited guest. His undoubted talent, his unadorned elegance, his rapidly acquiring celebrity, made him very desirable, even in places where his lack of fortune would undoubtedly, otherwise, have been no means of admission.

So he met the beautiful, cold, placid girl time after time; found her always only a least particle friendly, even a little haughty, and worshipped her as a heathen does a bright, shining far-off star.

Not that he was not worthy of her; he was her equal in every thing save position and money; and so far things had very fairly that Sidney Redmayne's brains were rapidly winning him both; that in a few years he would stand where Mr. Chester had been years and years climbing.

Nor was it that to this wildly-worshipping lover of hers Ida Chester was less kind than to others. She was haughty and distant because it was her nature, and because circumstances—the circumstances of birth, breeding and immeasurable riches—had somehow forced her into it.

Several times she had thought, casually, of Sidney Redmayne's proud, handsome face—fully as stern and haughty as her own, only, unlike hers, it belied his nature, that was as sunny as a child's, and as gentle as a woman's, while, as we said, hers needed only some warning influences to melt it into one of perfect sweetness.

For this beautiful icicle, Sidney Redmayne was longing; for a touch of her hand, that sent his own pulse bounding so madly; for a bow of her queenly head, that blazened afresh the flame in his heart; and he decided, very sensibly that, after all, he would make one grand effort to shake himself free from the fetters that could only grow heavier and heavier.

"I'll not go back to the city, like a love-sick boy, to see even Ida Chester's fair face! I'll fight it out on this line, if it does take till the first of October! Hallo, Zip, where are you going?"

It was the first opportunity that offered to begin his grand "shaking off" effort, and his inevitable fate appeared in the humble guise of Zip Pike, the farmer's son, who rode slowly past his window on a load of bags. He looked up to Sidney's window at sound of his name.

"Got a grist for the mill. Want a ride?"

It would be a change, for an hour or so at any rate, from the morbidly unpleasant thoughts that had gotten pretty firm hold of him. Yes, he'd ride to the mill on a load of grist—he, who loved Miss Ida Chester, the belle of the *creme de la creme* of Murray Hill!

He seized his Panama and a silk umbrella—Sidney was very particular about his belongings, whether vegetating in the country or driving his modest little phaeton in Central

Park after office hours—and went down the low, broad stairs to the front piazza, where Zip had stopped his cart for Sidney's accommodation.

"Pretty hot in the sun, yet," he remarked, explanatorily, as he hoisted his "Paragon Frame."

"Middlin'; a fine breeze, though, after the heavy rain. I reckon old Sandycroft's in high glee if the mill-stream's riz."

"Sandycroft? Sandycroft! That outlandish name sounds somewhat familiar, it seems. Is Sandycroft the miller?"

"He's the miller, and a right down smart one. His folks is the primist people hereabouts, specially Mirandy."

Sidney smiled at the brown blush that rushed to the honest young fellow's face—this yearman in love with a country lass, whose course of affection ran as if on satin. For a moment Sidney wished Ida Chester were the miller's daughter, and he the farmer's son. Zip's friendly gossip put to flight any little train of thought Sidney was meditating.

"Mirandy's purty as a plecter, in my notion, though there's enough 'd think the gal a-board-in' there 'd beat her. That there boarder is a stunner, though!"

Sidney was leaning comfortably, if not gracefully against a bag of grist, with half-closed eyes, listening dreamily to Zip's talk, and the droning of the bees as they flew by, or the chirp of the locusts, and as they drew nearer, the music of the mill, and the swish of the water as the monster wheel made its evolutions.

A boarder had the Sandycrofts? He hoped she wasn't as disgusted as he was. He wished her no worse luck.

"A reg'lar stunner, you know," went on Zip, confidentially. "Mirandy says as how she comes right down in the kitchen and helps right and left. Makes pies and cakes—"

"She must be a stunner to make pizen cakes," remarked Sidney, dryly. "Who eats them?"

But Zip failed to appreciate the little fun, and answered in good faith:

"All of 'em, and proper good they air, too. She's giv' lots of roses to Mirandy, you know, and shows her how to fix up her ribbons and things real city style, I tell you."

"She is a godsend, truly."

"She's not very good-lookin'—if that's what yer drivin' at; leastwise, I don't admire yellowish hair and chany-blue eyes. Mirandy's snappin' black ones sink me."

Sidney smiled languidly. "Yellowish hair and chany-blue eyes! Horrors! why could Lip not have called it 'pale gold floss, and eyes the hue of the wood violet' that could have meant Ida Chester! Then it occurred to him that Zip, unlike a great many other people, called things by their plain, unvarnished names."

"Here we be! You'll stretch your legs for a minute, Mr. Redmayne, while we unload?"

And Sidney sprang down to the grassy turf in front of a shady, fairy spot, where half-a-dozen youngsters stood and stared at him, and a baby in some one's arms raised a yell at the intruder.

He glanced carelessly around at the charmingly fair scene of wood and lawn that bordered the mill-stream; at the low stone cottage, overrun with vines, at the "snappin' black eyes" of "Mirandy," as she came to take the squalling young-one; and then, casually, at the young, girlish woman who had been holding him.

And he saw, in a blue chintz wrapper, and a white apron—Ida Chester!

Her queenly head, with its glory of yellowish hair, was slightly averted; she had not seen him; but what a thrill of exquisite joy danced through every vein of his frame. He walked up to her.

"Miss Chester, I am delighted! and we have been neighbors so long, and I did not know it. He extended his hand and looked at her said, and more, from his ardent eyes.

She never blushed even, but a quick glow of satisfaction was in her eyes as she smiled and gave him her hand.

"I have been *wining*, Mr. Redmayne, this summer."

"Then, like myself, you feel what a sham society and its demands are, Miss Chester, if—"

He checked the words on his tongue's end, but I think a sudden revelation came to Ida Chester with the hesitation in his speech, the mute eloquence of his eyes.

"It seems so strange," he said, an hour afterward, when, better and closer friends, as they sat on the bench, under the chestnut tree, that several seasons had left them; "it seems to be too good to be true, that you are here. It seems incredible that you, and Ida Chester in diamonds and laces, are the same person."

She flushed a little, now.

"Every one misjudges me," she returned. "When we are in Rome, we must do as Romans do. When we can leave it behind us, it is a luxury to follow one's natural bent."

"Then you are not proud, and stern, and unapproachable, and haughty?"

"Oh, Mr. Redmayne! am I such a sinner in your eyes?"

She laughed as she spoke—such music, from her, he never had dreamed among the possibilities.

"You were; you are not now. I thank God I was mistaken."

He spoke so eagerly, so reverently, that his meaning must have occurred to her.

"Shall I show you our Niagara?" she said, rising hastily, but with a rare sweetness on her face, in her eyes, her language.

He went with her as in a dream of intoxicating bliss; and when he said good-by, and asked if he might come again, and heard her say yes, and suddenly avert her eyes—oh! Sidney Redmayne suddenly changed his mind about the country in general, and this vicinity in particular. And somehow, both he and Miss Chester thought the autumn, the gorgeous frosty autumn, too beautiful to miss seeing, so they stayed and rambled, and rode, and loved!

And to-day, after years of married life, Sidney and Ida go regularly every summer to farmer Pike's; and the only difference between these later summers and that one, is, Mrs. Chester is obliged to run in often to renew her charges to the nurse-girl regarding Master Sidney, Jr.!

Gentleman George:

OR,
PARLOR, PRISON, STAGE AND STREET.

A STRANGE ROMANCE OF NEW YORK LIFE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "THE MAN-FROM-TEXAS," "MAD DETECTIVE," "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOY," "WOLF DEMON," "OVER- LAND KIT," "RED MAZEPA," "ACE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.

JEMMISON ON THE SCENT.

SATURDAY evening at half-past seven; the crowd besieging the box-office at Niblo's Garden plainly indicated that there would be an

excellent audience present that night to receive the charming Miss Ellen Desmond.

The manager as usual was hovering about the entrance, and the indefatigable Mr. Medham posted by the ticket-taker, was mentally calculating how much money there would be in the "house" that night.

By one of those lucky chances which sometimes occur in this life, Neil Jemmison, passing into the theater, came face to face with the manager, and the thought occurred that from that jovial personage he might learn something respecting the woman whose face had produced such an effect upon him. Possibly if Jemmison had not been brought face to face with the manager, he would never have thought of cross-examining him.

"How do you do?" said Jemmison, halting, and extending his hand.

"Glad to see you!" exclaimed the stranger, almost at the same time, and then he shook Jemmison's hand cordially.

"How is business with you?"

"Oh, excellent; look at them coming in!"

"Miss Desmond is attractive then?"

"Oh, yes; she has been doing splendidly."

"So I judged; I have attended three or four times myself."

"Yes; I saw you the other night."

"By the way, where does Miss Desmond come from?" Jemmison asked, carelessly. "Is she an English actress?"

"Oh, no, American; she has been playing in the West for some time—three or four years, I believe."

"I do not remember ever hearing of her before," Jemmison remarked.

"She made no reputation to speak of; this engagement is really the beginning of her career. But, how do you like her?"

"Very well, indeed."

"She is very pretty."

"Yes, magnificent hair."

"Perfectly splendid!" responded the manager.

"Very long, too, and so very black."

"Black!" cried the worthy manager, in astonishment.

"Yes; black of course."

"But her hair isn't black!"

"No? Jemmison assumed to be surprised; why, it looks black from the front of the house. It's a dark brown then, I presume."

"Neither black nor brown; it's a most beautiful gold-color—a tawny yellow."

Now, Jemmison was really surprised.

"She has light hair?"

"Yes, she wears a wig in this piece."

Jemmison had noticed the yellow hair when the actress had passed him in front of the *Mission Doves*, but at once had come to the conclusion that it was not her own.

"I did not think of that," Jemmison confessed.

"Most beautiful golden hair!" the manager repeated.

During this conversation the two had withdrawn to one side so as to get out of the way of the human life-current that was streaming into the theater.

"In fact," continued the manager, "she is about as pretty a woman as I have seen in a long while. That's one reason why she draws, you know; there's nothing like beauty and talent combined. It was just an accident that I happened to get her here. I was going to do a new show-piece and found out that I couldn't get it ready in time. I had about two weeks open, and nothing that was sure to draw to put in. I had considerable correspondence with this lady's business manager, a Mr. Medham—deuced smart fellow, by the way; knows what the people want—and had made up my mind to give the lady a trial on the first favorable opportunity, so I engaged her for the two weeks, but I think that she is safe to play six or seven."

When the manager spoke of the actress' business agent the idea flashed at once into Jemmison's head that possibly from her own business manager he could procure the information he wished.

"Medham," Jemmison said, reflectively; "that name sounds familiar to me. Is he one of our New York men?"

"No, I think not; he's been around New York a great deal though. He's a theatrical speculator."

"Probably I know him; the name is very familiar."

"There he is now."

The manager pointed out Medham, who, standing by the door-tender, caressing his fat chin, seemed the very picture of happiness. The steady inflow of paying patrons delighted the soul of the lady's business manager.

Jemmison took a good look at Mr. Medham, then shook his head.

"No, I was wrong; I don't know him," he had to confess.

"Shall I call him over and introduce you?" the manager asked. "If you feel at all curious about Miss Desmond he can tell you all about her. He discovered her somewhere out West playing in some little traveling company, I believe. In fact he has made her what she is. Her talent wouldn't amount to much without his advertising skill to make it known. He's smart as a steel-trap—a regular Massachusetts Yankee."

"Yes; I really think I should like to know him," Jemmison replied.

Just at that moment the manager happened to catch Medham's eye and beckoned for him. When Medham approached, the manager introduced him to Jemmison, and then, begging to be excused, withdrew to his private office.

"Likely to be a large audience in attendance this evening," Neil remarked.

Rubbing his hands together briskly, Medham replied, with an air of intense satisfaction, that the audience promised to be the largest of the week.

Then Jemmison came at once to the subject which formed the attraction of the audience, the young and pretty actress.

Medham was in no way averse to conversing about her, but his conversation only tended to her talents as an actress—the great success she was meeting with, and how worthy she was of such triumphs.

Jemmison, keen and subtle student of human nature, perceived, after about five minutes conversation, that the business-manager was no fool, and that he was not to be put through the process of "pumping" with impunity.

Of Miss Ellen Desmond the actress he spoke freely and frankly, but of Miss Desmond off the stage and in private life he was strangely reserved.

Jemmison quickly comprehended that to gain the information he wanted, he must pursue some other plan than to attempt to extract it from the shrewd business-manager by a series of deftly-put questions. So, deciding upon a plan of operations, he proceeded to carry it out.

When the curtain rose, Jemmison and Medham in company repaired to the auditorium. The eyes of the business-manager sparkled with delight as he gazed upon the well-filled house.

Together the two watched the progress of the play; together, between the acts, they sought the saloon of the Metropolitan Hotel, where Jemmison ordered a bottle of champagne, much to Medham's astonishment, who

at once set his new-made acquaintance down as being a "full-blooded white man."

Jemmison insisted upon paying for every thing, and at the end of the fourth act it was with regret that Medham felt obliged to excuse himself to Jemmison and explain that he had to visit the box-office to "count up the house," and thereby ascertain how much money was due to Miss Desmond as her share of the proceeds of the night.

Jemmison simply asked how soon he would be at liberty, and on Medham replying that it would only take thirty minutes or so, said that he would wait for him, and suggested that as they had commenced they might as well make a night of it, to which the business-manager gravely assented.

It was not often that Mr. Almer Medham ran across an acquaintance who insisted upon standing champagne of the best brands at every "round."

Medham generally rode home with the actress, but he knew how he could arrange that matter.

Jemmison smiled grimly to himself as he reflected that soon the secret would be revealed to him.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"WINE WORKS WONDERS."

Just a minute or two before the curtain descended, thereby indicating that the play had ended, Medham came forth from the box-office and rejoined Jemmison.

"It will be over in a minute or so," the business-manager said, referring to the play. "Just wait for me in the saloon. I shall have to explain to Miss Desmond that I have an engagement. I usually escort her home. It won't detain me over ten minutes."

"Don't hurry yourself on my account," Jemmison remarked; "I'll wait."

Then Medham proceeded at once to the stage-door, leaving Jemmison to witness the closing scene of the play.

Finally the curtain descended, and Medham, encountering the tired actress at the "wing," escorted her to her dressing-room.

"A splendid house," she said, as she sunk down, exhausted, in a chair, while the burly negress proceeded to remove the raven-hued wig.

"Yes, a little over fifteen hundred dollars!" Medham exclaimed, jubilantly.

"And how much for the week?"

"Forty-five hundred and sixty-three dollars."

"And we share after three thousand."

"Yes, our share is fifteen hundred and thirty-one dollars and fifty cents."

"That is something like a share!" Miss Desmond exclaimed, exultingly.

"I bet ye," the business-manager replied, tersely; "a little different from the one-horse towns that we used to figure in, where we were lucky if we got enough to pay our board and printing bill and fare to the next town."

"What is our expense for the week?"

"Only about three hundred dollars; it only cost about two-fifty to advertise, and I think I did the thing up brown, too." With great satisfaction Mr. Medham indulged in this observation.

"We have made six hundred apiece, then, by the week," the actress said, thoughtfully.

"Quite correct!" Medham replied. "A very tidy little sum, and Zimmerman—he's the treasurer, you know—told me when we settled up to-night that he felt confident we would do fully as well, if not better, next week."

"Why, if this business continues we shall make a small fortune out of this engagement!" the actress exclaimed, and there was a strange sparkle and gleam in her eyes as she spoke.

"Oh, yes; but, my dear, I am sorry to say that there is only one New York in this country; still, after this triumph we shall be able to demand better terms from the western managers, and perhaps pick up a few ducats out there in the fall. If we can get Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, New Orleans, Baltimore and Pittsburgh, we are pretty safe for about three thousand dollars; the rest of the towns don't amount to much for us."

"Oh, yes, if our business only holds here. Boston and Philadelphia, too, will be good for us if we can get time at the right theaters. A New York success sweeps the country." The business manager felt extremely jubilant. Never before in his career had he carried off fifteen hundred dollars from the box-office on a Saturday night.

"Here's the six hundred for you, Nelly," he continued, drawing a huge roll of bills from his pocket and placing it on the dressing-table before the woman. "I want you to excuse me from seeing you home to-night. I want to go off and celebrate after the week's brilliant success."

"Very well; just as you please," Miss Desmond said, carelessly. "Did you notice that Mr. Bruyn was in the box again to-night?"

"Yes; I saw the Judge when he came in. By the way, he asked me to inform you that he should be pleased to call upon you if it was agreeable."

The eyes of the actress snapped, and the little white teeth came together for a moment with a savage clink as the points met. The look upon the face of the woman was a strange combination of rage and triumph blended. It was a minute or so before she spoke.

"Well," she said, at length, "I suppose that there is no harm in my receiving the gentleman."

"Not the slightest!" Medham exclaimed, abruptly. "I tell you what it is, Nelly, you've got the Judge fool. If you have a mind to play for it, you can win a position that will make half of old Bruyn's female friends turn pale with envy. The Judge is in dead earnest. He's no light-headed fool like these young dandies who sit in the front seats and try to attract your attention by flinging bouquets at you. I tell you, what, Nelly, to marry the Judge would be the biggest kind of a star engagement."

"And do you really think that he would marry me?" the actress demanded, seriously.

"Why not? He's evidently 'struck by you, to use the common term.'"

"But he is very rich, they say."

"What of that?" exclaimed Medham, contemptuously; "he'll not be the first man to charm a pretty woman by the offer of a golden cage. 'Go for him, Nelly! From what I have seen of the Judge, and from the way he speaks of you, I'll bet ten to one that you catch him!'"

"Well, I'll see," she said, with evident thoughtfulness.

"By, by, I'm off. If I happen to meet the Judge, I'll bring him up to-morrow afternoon." And then Medham withdrew and hastened to the saloon, where he had promised to meet Jemmison.

The business-manager had discovered that gentlemen smoking at the door on Broadway.

After Medham had apologized to Jemmison for keeping him waiting so long, and Jemmison had begged him not to mention it, Medham suggested some champagne to commence on, to which Jemmison had replied that he had already ordered supper in the adjoining restaurant, and that the champagne was in the ice.

At this announcement, Medham came at

once to the conclusion that the dark-eyed stranger was a prince in disguise, and then he suddenly remembered what the manager had told him about Jemmison being the heir to a gold-mine, and ceased to wonder at his liberality.

To the restaurant the two adjourned, and soon the supper was placed upon the table.

A thorough judge of the good things of this world, Jemmison had taxed to their utmost the resources of the establishment. And Medham, who, during his checkered career had trodden every round of the ladder of fortune from the foot to the top, had fully learned to appreciate the delicacies of the table, devoured the viands with great gusto. The wine, too, was excellent, and by the time supper was eaten, the two had got to the second bottle, and Medham felt supremely contented with himself and all the world.

Jemmison while playing the part of a courteous host still kept a wary eye upon his guest, and at length cautiously broached the subject.

"I have been very much pleased with Miss Desmond," he said, carelessly, after he had listened to Medham's praise of the lady's talent; "and her face seems so familiar to me that I feel sure I have met her before."

"Seen her act somewhere, perhaps," suggested Medham.

"No; I have never seen her act; I am sure of that; but I think I used to know her before she went on the stage, say some sixteen or eighteen years ago," Jemmison said.

"She's only eighteen now, you know," Medham observed with a sly wink, filling up his glass as he spoke.

"To the public, yes, I understand all about that. But if my idea is correct, she is about thirty-six or thirty-eight years old."

"I don't really think she is as old as that, although she's no chicken," Medham remarked; "of course I shouldn't say this to every one."

"But is her name Desmond?"

"Yes, I think it is," Medham responded; "at least I never knew her by any other name, and if it isn't her right name she knows enough to keep that shady. I can tell you all I know of her, in about a minute. I was out West as agent for a dramatic company playing in the small Ohio towns, and this Miss Desmond came from Cincinnati to join us, sent by a dramatic agent there. I saw that the girl had stuff in her, though she only came to play small parts. So I proposed to her to go starring with me. I had a stake of about a thousand dollars that I was willing to risk. She jumped at the offer and so we started. As to her past life, what she had been before she went on the stage, I know no more

that there was a wide difference between Judge Bruyn and Neil Jemison—and he might also have added with truth, between Almer Medham at midnight with two bottles of Champagne under his jacket, and the same gentleman at noon with a slight head-ache and perfectly innocent of sense-bewildering drink. To Jemison he had frankly revealed all he knew concerning the actress, even his own opinion regarding her age, but to the Judge he was as dumb as an oyster.

And innocent and artless Mr. Medham never betrayed by a word or look that he was perfectly conscious he was undergoing the legal operation known as a cross-examination.

The Judge, able and skillful as he certainly was, had his labor for his pains, and therefore alighted at the door of Miss Desmond's house no wiser in regard to her than when, three hours before, he had driven with Medham up Broadway.

Miss Desmond, dressed as usual very plainly, but in such becoming garments that they seemed to enhance her beauty, received the Judge with a blush and a smile. Gracefully and charmingly she begged his pardon for receiving him in house attire, but added in her innocent, child-like way that she had no visitors except Mr. Medham, and he was used to her simple dress.

The Judge, old, cautious man of the world as he was, well versed in all the tricks of humanity, was caught by the frank simplicity of the actress. She possessed far more natural abilities in the acting line than he gave her credit for, and she did not always need the stage of the theater to display them.

Bruyn never thought of the trite adage that a woman is never so dangerous as when she seems to be most helpless.

After a few minutes' conversation upon the common subjects of the weather, Miss Desmond's success, and the prospects for the future, Mr. Medham begged to be excused for twenty or thirty minutes, as he had some business letters to write in reference to Miss Desmond's future engagements, and asked the lady's permission to use her pen and ink and turn the dining-room into an office.

Miss Desmond smilingly gave the desired permission, and called to the negress to get Mr. Medham what he wanted.

After Medham withdrew, promising as he did so that he would not be long, the Judge noticed a Sunday newspaper lying upon the table, and as he gazed at it, again the bold head-line, "Gentleman George!" caught his eye.

Carelessly he picked the paper up and read the name aloud, and as he did so, closely watched the face of the actress. Not a muscle moved. The face, calm and white, might have been carved out of marble for all the emotion that it betrayed when the felon's name was pronounced.

"A strange name, Miss Desmond?" the Judge remarked.

"Yes, very strange," she returned, and as she spoke she darted a quick glance at the Judge from her long dark eye-lashes—so quick that even the sharp eyes of Bruyn did not detect it.

"Have you read the particulars of the case?" he asked; and despite his effort to appear careless and unconcerned, the legal sharpness of the lawyer was plainly apparent.

Again came the short, quick glance from under the long, dark lashes. The man skilled in the law was no match for the sharp-eyed woman of the world. His face betrayed the secret that he preserved.

"Yes, I am quite interested in his case—to use your legal term," she replied. Her face as calm and her voice as firm as if it was the most natural thing in the world for her to be interested in the career of a society brigand.

The Judge's face fully revealed the astonishment that he felt at this candid confession.

"I really cannot understand why you should take any interest in the life or death of any such fellow as this Dominick," he said.

"Why, I know him," she answered, innocently.

"You do?"

"Yes, I became acquainted with him about a year ago. He stopped at the same hotel that I did. I was in a little town out west. He seemed to be very much of a gentleman and helped me a great deal; I was just struggling along then. He said that he was connected with the New York press and promised to aid me to get an engagement here. Then he went away suddenly and I never saw or heard of him again until I received a letter, telling me that he was in the Tombs and asking me to visit him."

"And did you go?" The Judge put the question admiringly, considering that he knew that she had gone.

"Yes, he wished me to assist him if I could do so, and said that his arrest was all a scheme of some personal enemies to ruin him."

"Don't you believe it, Miss Desmond?" exclaimed the Judge decidedly. "He is a thorough scoundrel, I know it as a fact."

"In that case, then, I will not take any more notice of him," the actress said, quite promptly.

The Judge smiled; he imagined that he had "made his game."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 186.)

"Doin' Their Dooty."

BY EBBE E. REXFORD.

"Who's that a-comin' up the road, Betsey Jane? I swan, it looks jest like Miss Wood's old green calash."

Mrs. Deacon Pepperridge called to her daughter from the kitchen. Betsey Jane was sweeping out the sitting-room, and would command a better view of the road than her mother could.

"It's Miss Wood," answered Betsey Jane, after taking a look out of the window.

"I swan!" exclaimed Mrs. Pepperridge, coming into the sitting-room. "I'd rather 'a' seen the old feller himself a-comin' here than that woman. She'll stay an' stay, an' I dunno as she'd ever go away if you urged her hard enough. She's got some tattlin' started, you may jest bet. Don't she look horrid in that old bunnit! Old as the hills! I can jest remember when it was new, an' that's all."

At this juncture Mrs. Wood knocked at the front door.

"Run an' open it, Betsey Jane," said Mrs. Pepperridge, in a tone of resignation. "Sense she's here, we've got to make the best of it."

Betsey Jane went to the door and admitted Mrs. Wood.

"Why, good-mornin'!" exclaimed Mrs. Pepperridge, with great effusion, and delight beaming all over her face. "How do ye do, Miss Wood? It's been a dog's age sence ye were here. I didn't know as ye ever meant to cum ag'in. Folks all well to hum, I s'pose, or ye wouldn't 'a' been here?"

"Yes, to'ble, thank ye," answered Mrs. Wood. "Josiah, he's got the rheumatism's perty snug but he's a-gittin' better now."

"Take off yer things an' set down in this rockin'-cheer," said Mrs. Pepperridge. "I declare, Miss Wood, ef you don't beat all to keep yer things a-lookin' es ef they was bran new. As I was jest a-tellin' Betsey Jane, yer bunnit don't look secerally any diff'rent than it did

when you fust got it. Them ruffles an' these gethers here is really right in fash'n. Take her things, Betsey Jane, an' put 'em where the flies won't get on 'em."

"Beautiful mornin'," said Mrs. Wood, producing her snuff-box. "Hey a pinch, Miss Pepperridge?"

"Wal, I don't care ef I do," answered Mrs. Pepperridge, inserting her fingers in the proffered box. "The deakin, he don't like to hev me use snuff, but I du onc't in awhile. You allus hev the best kind, Miss Wood. 'Tain't much like Malviny Jones's. I can't go lers, no-way."

"I give a dollar a pound fer mine down to Perkins grocery," answered Mrs. Wood, complacently. "I can't like Malviny's, nuther. It's so kinder strong, someway—seems to pucker my nostrils all up."

"What's the news?" asked Mrs. Pepperridge, producing her knitting-work, and sitting down for a good talk.

"Oh, nothin' in pertickler," answered Mrs. Wood. "I s'pose, tho', you've heard the stories that's round about that Miss Dallas, that's livin' in the widder Jackson's house this summer?"

"Not a word," answered Mrs. Pepperridge. "Du tell me about it, Miss Wood. I hain't heard any thing about what's goin' on in the neighborhood."

"Why, you see," began Mrs. Wood, knitting around to her "seam-needle," and then laying down to work, in order to do full justice to the story; "you see, this Miss Dallas, she's a married woman, an' Mr. Dallas, he's quite along in years. Much as fifty-five, or sich a matter. Wal, he stays with her till Sat'day afternoons, and then he goes to the city, an' stays till Monday mornin' reglar, every week. Now Seth Jones, he tells me, an' so does Mirandy Mallory, an' she ought to know, livin' jest across the road from the Widder Jackson's house, that every Sat'day night, after Mr. Dallas has gone to the city, a young feller comes out on the last train, an' visits Miss Dallas. Mirandy ses she's seen him kissin' her morn' once, an' that they walk up an' down the garding as lovin' as ye please, an' as bold as brass, arm in arm. An' every Sunday night he goes back to the city, an' the bell's is, among folks that order to be sayable o' jedge, that she ain't sich a woman as she order to be. Mr. Dallas appears to be an awful nice man, an' he order know jest how his wife carries on when he's gone, but I wouldn't want to tell him. He's probably been deceived in her. Most likely she married him 'cause he'd lots o' money, or somethin' like that. I feel sorry for him, I declare."

"You don't say!" exclaimed Mrs. Pepperridge. "I never heard a word on't before, not a syllable! An' nobody's sed a word to her husband about it? Should s'pose somethin' 'd fed it their duty to. Probly he thinks she's jest what she order to be. It's a shame to let him be deceived in that way, I think."

"That's what I told Josiah," said Mrs. Wood. "But land! Josiah sed 'twan't none o' my business, an' I'd better keep my nose out of it. Thank goodness, I don't meddle with anybody's business, but I du like to see things conducted decent."

"So du I," agreed Mrs. Pepperridge. "An' oh! I forgot part on't," exclaimed Mrs. Wood suddenly. "Joe Mallory, he was goin' by the Jackson house one night, Sat'day, I b'leeve, anyway it don't make any difference when 'twas, an' he found a piece of writin'—paper all scribbled over, an' he picked it up an' brought it hum, an' give it to his mother, an' would you b'leeve it, Miss Pepperridge? It's a letter to this feller, I s'pose, any way some feller to come an' see her while her husband's gone? Yes, Miss Pepperridge, it's true, for I've seen the letter myself; I wouldn't 'a' b'leeved it, if I hadn't."

"The land sakes!" Mrs. Pepperridge lifted her hands in amazement. "I think it's a right up-an'-down shame to hev sich scandalous proceedin's goin' on in the neighborhood, right under our face and eyes, an' not say a word about it to the poor, deceived husband. Jest imagine how you'd feel, Miss Wood, if Josiah was a-runnin' off to see some other woman every time your back was turned, an' the neighbors suddenly 'd find out, an' say any thing to you about it! Per my part, I feel as if there was a duty to du, in sich cases."

"An' so du I," answered Mrs. Wood. "Didn't some one knock?"

"Why, is that you Mirandy Mallory? Cum in. Miss Wood an' I was jest talkin' about that Miss Dallas, an' her carryin' on, an' I was so busy that I did not hear you knock, till Miss Wood spoke on't. Take a cheer, an' lay off yer things."

Mrs. Mallory accepted the chair, and removed her shawl and bonnet. And then the conversation regarding that "awful Miss Dallas" had to be gone over with. These three women were the representative gossipers of Kent's Corners, and could keep as much mischief going as any dozen common women.

Before they separated, it was decided that it was their "duty" to inform Mr. Dallas of his wife's reprehensible conduct, and Mrs. Deacon Pepperridge was selected as the proper woman to perform that delicate mission.

Accordingly the next Saturday, when Mr. Dallas started for the train to bear him cityward, Mrs. Deacon Pepperridge, who had been watching his residence from Mrs. Mallory's, sent little Joe Mallory out to intercept the gentleman and bring him in.

Wondering what could be wanted of him, he followed Joe into the house, and Mrs. Pepperridge, with a due sense of her "duty," began her story at once, and informed him what the neighbors had seen, and ended by proffering her sympathy to him in his time of trouble.

"So my wife meets another man, every time I'm gone, does she?" he said, with a peculiar twinkle in his eyes. "I must ask her about it. Please come over, ladies, and we'll see what she has to say for herself."

Mrs. Pepperridge and Mrs. Mallory accompanied Mr. Dallas back to his house. Mrs. Dallas looked very much surprised to see them.

"These ladies tell me that you are in the habit of receiving visits from a young man every time I am gone, and say that they have seen him kiss you. I thought I'd ask you about it, because if you are my wife, and they say you are, I don't want young men kissing you."

"We've got a letter you wrote to him, telling him to come," said Mrs. Mallory; "you needn't deny it."

"I'm sure I don't know what you're talking about," said Mrs. Dallas. "Do you?" to Mr. Dallas.

"I think I do," he answered, a sly twinkle of fun in his eyes. "Ladies, you've made an awful mistake. You thought I was her husband; I'm her father-in-law, and I go into town to church over Sunday, and my son, her husband, comes out and stays till Sunday night. That's the whole of it. I'm much obliged to you for your sympathy, but I don't feel in need of it, just at present."

"I know what they have got hold of, regarding a letter," laughed Mrs. Dallas. "I lost a page of manuscript, from one of my stories. It must have blown out of the window, and some one found it. Dear! dear! Isn't it rich! I must write it up. It will make a capital story

for a sketch. To think they thought you were my husband!" and the lady laughed till she cried.

Mrs. Mallory and Mrs. Pepperridge withdrew somewhat discomfited, but feeling that they had done their "duty."

And this is the true record of the last sensation in Kent's Corners.

RED ARROW. THE WOLF DEMON; OR, The Queen of the Kanawha.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.
AUTHOR OF "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "THE MAN FROM TEXAS," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "AGE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XII. THE FIGHT UNTO THE DEATH.

The two scouts looked upon the blood-stained carpet with a sigh.

"The blood is fresh, too!" cried Boone. "Lark must have been killed by this monster immediately after we missed him in the thicket."

"It looks like it," said Kenton, solemnly. "Let us look for the body."

But as they were about to commence their search, the sound of footfalls approaching through the wood fell upon their ears.

"Hush!" cried Boone, grasping Kenton by the arm as he spoke; "do you hear that?"

"It's some one coming through the wood."

"Yes, and hyer all comers are enemies and not friends; let's to cover," said Boone.

A second after the two woodmen were snugly concealed in the bushes.

The steps came nearer and nearer, and then, through the gloom of the night, the watching eyes of the two saw the fearful form of the terrible Wolf Demon approaching.

He walked not now with stealthy tread but his step was heavy and slow. His head was bent down, low upon his breast. Slowly he came on, upon the edge of the bank.

Ke-ne-ha-ha did not seek to parry the attack; but nimbly he evaded it by springing to one side.

The tomahawk of the Wolf Demon spent its force upon the air; and as he passed, the wily Indian dealt him a terrible stroke upon the head, that cut in deep through the wolf-skin, and felled him heavily to the earth.

A hoarse note of triumph came from the lips of the chief as he beheld the downfall of his foe. But his joy was of short duration, for, like the ancient god of the fable that gathered strength from being cast to earth, the Wolf Demon rose to his feet. The shock of the fall had torn the tomahawk from his hand, but he did not seek to regain the weapon.

With naked hands—weaponless—he faced the Shawnee chief. The blood streaming down freely over his face—over the black and white pigments with which it was painted in horrid fashion—made him look like an evil spirit fresh from the fires below.

His eyes shot lurid flames as he glared upon the Shawnee warrior.

Ke-ne-ha-ha grasped his tomahawk with desperate energy and waited for the attack of the unarmed foe.

The Shawnee chieftain did not have long to wait.

With the spring of a tiger the Wolf Demon leaped upon the Indian.

Desperately Ke-ne-ha-ha struck at him with the tomahawk, but the Wolf Demon warded off the blow with his arm, and despite the efforts of the chief to prevent it, he closed in with him.

Sinewy and supple was the Shawnee warrior, yet he was but as a child in the powerful grasp of his terrible foe.

The Wolf Demon held him in a grip of iron. His arms, linked round the Indian like bands of steel, were crushing the life out of him little by little.

Vainly Ke-ne-ha-ha struggled to free himself from the anaconda coil.

Like the serpent of far-off India, wreathing its huge length around its prey, the Wolf Demon held the Shawnee chieftain in his grip.

The breath of the Indian came thick and hard.

Up and down in the narrow confines of the wigwam snaked the contending foes, like two venomous snakes coiled together.

Exerting all his strength, the Indian tried to break the grasp of the Wolf Demon. Vainly he struggled—vainly he tried. He felt that his strength was going fast.

Tight and tighter grew the grip of steel.

The Indian turned black in the face. The blood gushed from his mouth. He ceased to struggle. The grip relaxed and Ke-ne-ha-ha fell to the ground, dead.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 190.)

Duke's Expectations.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

RUDDY gleams streaked the northern sky, deep crimson fading to palest rose. Rather a remarkable display of the aurora borealis, and as such claiming the attention of those who made note of phenomena. Duke Greyson was not generally included in the number, but he had found by chance that a north hall window framed in Miss Torrey, and immediately he discovered a hitherto unsuspected enthusiasm for the heavenly wonder.

"Tolerably neat thing in the way of celestial fireworks, Miss Torrey, but you ought to see a dozen oil wells on fire to have an idea of the Inferno. Some excitement in a scene like that."

It is only a thought from heaven to earth, and Miss Torrey made the descent safely.

"I have heard of your heroism on that occasion. They say it was owing chiefly to your efforts that the flames did not communicate to the whole valley."

"They say," he taken the best side of the question, for once, certainly an unprecedented move for that ubiquitous gossip. I was the only man there when the fire broke out, and I had to work like a Turk, but to Providence and a favoring wind belongs all the credit. A hundred men couldn't have put a straw in the way of stopping it if it had once communicated to the gas of the flat where the main lot of wells were located."

"An illustration of the mutability of fortune. Uneasy lies the head, etc., and the crown of riches I daresay is not so very easy to be worn. Banks break, stocks are uncertain, and—oil wells are subject to conflagration. Query—not for you or I, Mr. Greyson—what shall the rich do to be safe?"

"Not for us indeed. There's my King Midas of an uncle, now. I may step into his shoes some day, but I wouldn't do it by metempsychosis for his kingdom. That's an example of a rise our country may well be proud of, but how the country is benefited thereby is more than I at present see. He began spinning cot-

ton in the New England mills, got to be a manufacturer, and at last went out to India and opened a branch of commerce on his own score.

Was rich as a Jew in just no time, as you might say, and contracted a liver complaint which would have killed him in a twelvemonth, but may last out double that time here. He took the warning and went home, but not satisfied, even with one foot in the grave, he must go to speculating in oil, and, with his usual luck, it turns to gold, or what is the same thing in this day, greenbacks, under his finger.

Quite a happy thing for me, however, for young man with no income and no profession, there is only one resource open, to become a confidential agent, and, 'pon honor, I don't know how I should have been elevated to that responsible position but for uncle Judah."

"You almost reconcile me to my own lot. Somebody says there is no woman but at least one time in her life wishes she had been born a man. Quite natural when we contrast our own narrow limit with the broad scope of man's usefulness and independence, not pinning to your view of it. Even that has its bright side in the phase of 'great expectations'."

"And better based than such expectations generally are, let me hope. Of course, I've got to make a sacrifice, nothing comes without sacrifice in this world, you know, but in such a cause who would not?"

"We have lost the aurora in our discussion. There is only its ghost left."

"Aurora—that means rosy light. Equivalent, I take it, to seeing things through rose-colored spectacles. A pleasant sort of willing optical delusion. Don't you find it so, Miss Torrey?"

"I am not sure that I have ever made the trial. King Midas' hair—apparently can very properly look through rose-tinted spectacles, but it would be folly for his sister's governess to attempt the same glasses."

"You put it too hard for our land of democracy. All of one degree, that is our boast, isn't it? To paraphrase the commonest venture matrimonial, which is the retaliation of your sex for that narrow limit you mentioned a moment ago—"

"She married him for his money. He married her for her face."

You at least need not wish for a better fortune than you carry in your face, Helena."

That was a blunt compliment surely, but Duke was blunt in all he said, and sincerity relieved the bad taste of personality. The face was slightly upturned toward him, towering a full head above her, but there is no denying that his heart beat faster for the almost expectant glance of those soft, dark eyes. Duke had not the slightest intention of committing himself, however. King Midas' hair—apparently not mias that wealth by a false step. He was equal to any amount of soft nonsense generally, but it was a relief that Mrs. Carter brushed close upon them at that moment.

"Is it you, Duke?" she asked, catching sight of the pair. "There was a letter brought in for you, I think. Miss Torrey, you?"—displeased surprise here. "I left you to play in case any of the people cared to dance."

"I beg pardon, but I misunderstood you. I will be at their service immediately." Miss Torrey inclined her head and swept away much too regally for a simple governess, and Duke following more slowly did not care to repress a quiver of admiration.

"She wouldn't be put down by a duchess," he thought. "A device of a pity she can't be something of the sort for herself. It won't do for me to think of her, however, and for her peace of mind as well as my own, it's probably best that uncle Judah looms in view."

Some other good-natured person had taken possession of the instrument, and Miss Torrey was nowhere to be seen, when he strolled into the parlor a moment later.

"No news is good news, and I hope your news was not the opposite," said pretty Minnie Trevanion, as she obeyed a signal and sauntered to her side. "Was it your letter gave you that dolorous countenance?"

"These hideous yellow hangings rather, though they're wonderfully becoming to you. My letter? It was from uncle Judah, and he tells us here to-morrow. Nothing so bad in that. Did you see the phenomenon?"

"I saw you regarding it. Do tell me what you found to talk about with that quiet Miss Torrey. Entre nous, Miss Trevanion was a trifle jealous of the governess."

"Petroleum and metaphysics, I believe. The subjects would not interest you."

"I should think not, but you looked wonderfully as if you were saying—"

"How is it under our control? To love or not to love?"

"You should know me better. Think how selfish to rouse hopes never to be realized. I am doomed to celibacy, consequently denied flirtation, while woman-hating uncle Judah is to be consulted."

"Did you tell Miss Torrey that?"

"I would if it were necessary."

Miss Torrey, herself invisible, chanced to overhear that conversation. Possibly Duke was right in asserting that she had a fortune in her face; it was so well disciplined that the slight curl which touched her lips for a moment might have meant anything or nothing, except that Miss Torrey's smiles were not usually objectless.

Some one agitated the question of woman's rights next day, and the bold stand taken by the governess scandalized the more submissive females.

"It is scarcely to be hoped that women will ever exercise their rights," said Miss Torrey; "but in my opinion it is just as proper for us to ask the intentions of gentlemen who may choose to pay addresses as it is for them to form the object of seeking. Mutual understanding from the first does not preclude sentiment, and is much more satisfactory in a practical point of view."

"What would uncle Judah say to that?" thought Duke, with a suppressed whistle. "A woman radical!"

"Sensible young woman," was what uncle Judah did say, come in upon the group unexpectedly. "First one I ever saw in my life."

"You don't mean you'd have plucked enough to do it really?" he said to her a couple of days later, when a rapid acquaintance had been established between them. "I got a rumor that Duke was falling in love with his sister's governess, you, my dear, and came to put an end to such nonsense. Now I'll warrant you haven't asked his intentions."

"Certainly not. I have no personal interest in Mr. Greyson's actions, whatever rumor may have said. He affects to be a woman-hater like yourself, sir."

"Me—the puppy! He said that?"

"He remarked in substance that his expectations from you doomed him to celibacy."

"He is building up on expectations, is he? Ha, hum! We'll see! Tell you what, Miss Torrey, I stay here fortnight. Suppose you come to me in just one week and ask what my intentions are."

Miss Torrey did not require a second bidding, and withal managed him so skillfully that she did not overstep the boundary laid down by acknowledged propriety at last.

"Your aunt Judah that is to be," said the

modern King Midas, leading her to his nephew when that interview was concluded. "You shall have the agency, just the same, however," he said. "It is fair to be all Duke ever will have from him, since the liver complaint has been fairly vanquished, and there is a boisterous heir in the Judah household. After all it was a salutary lesson to Duke. The loss of his expectations made a man of him; he is working his own way by slower degrees, but with an independence which can never be felt in toadying for 'dead men's shoes,' and pretty Minnie Trevanion is no longer jealous in remembering Miss Torrey.

Forecastle Yarns.

A Hungry Tar.

BY C. D. CLARK.

"He was a lazy coot, mates, that Jim Bunker," said Pretty Pete Stafford, as we gathered around the fragrant stocking containing the "plum duff," which gave the crowning touch to our Christmas cheer, as we lay at Honolulu. That plum duff, pride of the sailor-heart—one remains at least to tell how much we loved you! Plum duff, the pudding par excellence of the sailor, would not be so savory to a landman, but to us it was a vision of glory. Sometimes, far away in the northern seas, our "plums" were dried apples, and we missed the flaming brandy-sauce which made this glorious. But to Pretty Pete's tale of Jim Bunker. We called him Pretty Pete because he was the most homely mortal who ever breathed; so much does the sailor delight in twisting the truth out of shape.

"Yes, he was a lazy coot," repeated pretty Pete; "but one thing he could do—he knew how to eat. Mates, I used to watch that man scoff his grub, and a sort of reverence grew up in my bosom for him from that hour. There must be something in a man who could eat like that."

"Why, mates, that man would make no more of scoffing this bag of plum duff than I would of eating a hunk of bread-brown. It was awful—awful! He'd bin drew out of half-a-dozen ships because he bred a famine there, and they could not stand him. No, by gracious, they couldn't."

"One day we was in Rio, and five or six of us chaps undertook to fill him up. We had our pockets full of shiners, you understand, because we had just bin paid off, and all of us, 'cept Jim, had a good 'lay.' So I sez to Jim, 'I'm going to fill you once of I bust you.'"

"Sez he, 'I wish you would, Pete, because I've ain't had not to say a full meal this cruise.' So I went to a tavern and ordered dinner. None of your Kickshaws, you understand, but good beefsteaks and inguns, and plenty of 'em. That was the order I give, and they bring on a platter of grub that would 'a' made your eyes stick out. We all scoffed a heap, and the plate was empty in a jiffy. I knowed what I was doing, and by the time it was gone, another platter took its place. It was hunky stuff, but we didn't want to get too full, 'cause there was plum duff coming, and we wanted room for that, but Jim Bunker cleared the plate without winking his eye.

"What'll you have now, Jim?" sez I, for though he'd scoffed about five pounds of solid meat, he looked holler yit.

"I believe I'll take a leetle more of that beefsteak," he says.

"By this time the people in the hotel began to admire him, because, you understand, the dinner was by contract, and they'd charged what they thought was a thundering big price for filling us up. But you see they didn't know Jim, and I did.

"While the beefsteak and inguns was cooking, Jim e't two or three pounds of cold meat and clam chowder, and sech light stuff as that, jest to stay his stomach, he sed, while they were getting suthin' to eat. He complained all the time that they brought thundery small doses, but he worried along until a big plate of beefsteak come on, and he surrounded it quicker than you could wink your eye.

"See here," he sez, 'I ain't goin' to git a meal to-day if this keeps on. Why don't they fetch on their grub 'stead of foolin' away their time this way. I want suthin' to eat.'

"The landlord began to look wild, for he saw that he had taken a big contract and didn't know certain that he could fill it. He came in and asked me to step out into the hall.

"What'll you take to let me off?" he sez. "You'll eat me out of house and home."

"We ain't eat a great deal, cap'n," sez I. "You five ain't eat as much as that man altogether. But look at him, please look at him. He looks hungrier than ever."

"I won't let you off," I sez. "Give him some more beefsteaks and inguns, and try to fill him that way."

"I'll try it," he sez, 'but I'm mighty feared it won't work.'

"So he went out to give the order, and while he was waiting Jim e't cold beef, chowder, pickles, cold ham, bread, tongue, cake—every thing he could git his cussid hands on, until the table looked like the Great African Desert after a dry spell. They bring in a smart heap of steaks and inguns, and Jim went through them with undiminished vigor and looked up for more. By this time we was full and had commenced on the grog, and had nothin' to do but watch the fun.

"Mates, it was a pester to see Jim Bunker eat. His jaws rose and fell with the regularity of the walkin'-beam of a steamer, and we was breking our hearts laughing at him, but the landlord didn't feel good.

"He rallied round me ag'in and tried to persuade me to choke Jim off, but I didn't see my way clear and wouldn't do it. Jim fel' back on light truck ag'in, but the landlord mautered and sed he didn't have no more beefsteak. I hinted to Jim that ham and eggs e't good, and he jumped at the idee and ordered a plateful. The landlord went away, cussin' till the air smelled of sulphur, and ordered the new dish. Jim swallowed six eggs and two pounds of ham, as ef he had jest commenced, and then went through what was left of the plum duff and ordered some more.

"You can't have it," roared the landlord. "It would take two hours to cook it."

"Beefsteak come in yet?" sez Jim.

"No; and we ain't goin' to have any more this day of grace 1898. Now, you hear me?"

"All right," sez Jim. "I ain't particular; bring on some more ham and eggs."

"Mates, you orter have seen that landlord's face. I thought he'd bust a blood-vessel, but he turned so blue round the muzzle, but he wouldn't bring on any thing more, and went tearing out of the house, swearing until I thort he'd raised the ruff.

"Mates," said Jim Bunker, with a sorrowful look, "it seems as ef fate was ag'in me; I can't git a square meal nowhere. Give me a glass of grog."

"He was ahead of us all about a gallon when we turned in, but the landlord said Jim could not eat breakfast in his house, and he went down to the Anchor, got suthin' to eat, and turned in. I give the old chap a leetle ex-

tra money in the mornin' and kinder soothed him down, but he sed ef I ever brought that cannibal to his house again he'd have my life. I dunno as I blame him much. Eight bells; time to turn in."

Field Sports and Pastimes.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

BASE-BALL.

OUR BASE BALL ASSOCIATIONS.

It is now nearly seventeen years since the First Convention of base-ball players was held in this city, and from the date of that Convention begins the history of our national game of ball. The first regular base-ball club was the Knickerbocker Club of New York, which was organized in 1845, and next year that club—now a still flourishing institution—will celebrate its thirtieth anniversary. Following the Knickerbocker came the Gotham Club in 1853, and the Eagle in 1854. The former club adopted a brief code of playing rules which governed the game until the rules adopted by the Convention of May, 1857, came into operation. In March, 1858, the "National Association of Base-Ball Players" was organized, and from that time to this the code known as "The Association Rules" has governed the game throughout the country.

At the first convention in 1857 sixteen clubs—all in existence at that period—were represented. At the Convention of 1858, when the National Association was organized, twenty-five clubs were represented, all of which hailed from New York and Brooklyn except one, and that was from New Brunswick. In 1859, clubs from Astoria, New Utrecht, Jamaica, and Buffalo, came into the fold, as also from Jersey City, Hoboken, and Trenton, New Jersey. In 1860 other Jersey clubs and five or six from Philadelphia joined the Association, as also single clubs from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. From 1860 to 1867 the enrolment of clubs in the National Association extended itself, until at the close of the first ten years of the National Association's existence, over three hundred clubs had their names recorded as members, no less than twenty-four States being represented. Of these, 38 were of New York City; 46 of Brooklyn; 63 of New York State clubs outside these cities; 39 from New Jersey; 76 from Pennsylvania; 25 from Connecticut, and the remainder from other States. The summary of the clubs belonging to the National Association and enrolled as members from 1858 to 1869 was as follows:—

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| New York State Clubs..... | 146 |
| Pennsylvania..... | 75 |
| New Jersey..... | 39 |
| Connecticut..... | 35 |
| District of Columbia..... | 10 |
| Maryland..... | 7 |
| Ohio..... | 6 |
| Twelve other States..... | 21 |

Total.....330

Of these, however, not over a hundred and twenty-five were ever represented at any single Convention, and these only at the great Convention of December 11, 1867, held in Philadelphia, a meeting which proved to be the culminating point in the history of the National Association. It was at the Convention of the year previous that the rapid growth of clubs throughout the country began to render it impossible to successfully run the National Association on the original basis of individual club representation, and in 1867 the experiment of State Association representation was tried, and at the Convention of that year no less than three hundred and fifteen clubs were duly represented by this plan, Illinois having 55, Ohio 42, Pennsylvania 27, Wisconsin 26, New York 25, Connecticut 24, Indiana 21, and Maryland 20. It was soon found, however, that while in theory, and under legitimate auspices, the rule of State Association representation would work well, its actual operation was marked by such abuses as to render it even a worse evil than the cumbersome method of individual club representation had been. So a better plan for the government of the fraternity was sought for. Just at this period of the game's history, however, a new trouble forced itself upon the attention of those who had taken up the subject of base-ball legislation, and that was the growing antagonism between the two existing classes of ball-players, who each claimed exclusive control of the National Association. It was at the convention of 1866 that it was decided that every player who played base-ball for money or for pecuniary compensation in any form should be regarded as a professional player, and such players were excluded from all participation in association club matches. At the Convention of 1868 this rule was changed by the influence of those clubs favoring the employment of professionals so as to make it optional with clubs to play professionals or not. At the Convention of 1869 an effort was made to restore the old rule, but it failed, and in consequence the Convention of 1870 proved to be the last meeting of the National Association as organized under the rules and regulations of the old Association Constitution. Seeing that it was impossible to rule the two classes by one organization, we went to work and organized first the National Association of Professional Players, and then the National Association of Amateur Players, and since these two organizations have existed the game has been played under one code of rules with the exception that the rules of the former allowed paid players and those of the latter did not.

We now come to the present position of things applicable to the government of the two classes of the fraternity, and looking at the existing state of affairs we find that, while the professional class have an Association in which every professional club is duly represented, the amateur class are controlled by half a dozen Associations. For instance, the New England Amateur Association regulates the intercourse of the clubs of that section. The Louisiana Association governs the clubs of the extreme South; the Pacific Base-Ball Association governs the clubs of the other side the Rocky Mountains; and the Pennsylvania Amateur Association regulates the affairs of all their State clubs, while all are governed by the one playing code of rules, viz., that which governs the Professional Association.

Coming up to the present time and looking at the facts in relation to the working of the National Association governing the amateur class, we can come to no other conclusion than that of regarding the time as gone by for the organization of any such institution through the medium of merely amateur club representation, such an institution we mean as should reflect the views and opinions of the amateur class of the fraternity, as did the old National Association in the days when professional ball-playing was unknown, and the whole of the clubs in the country did not contain a quarter as many as one city now contains. The Professional Association simply from the fact that the clubs of their class are so few that all can be readily enrolled and represented in the Association. This is not the case in regard to the

amateur class, nor can it be, widespread as are the thousand and odd clubs forming the great body of the amateur class of the fraternity. The important question therefore arises as to what organization are the amateurs to look for an authorized code of rules and regulations which shall be respected and obeyed as the governmental power of the amateur fraternity.

It will never do for the gathering of some thirty odd clubs, composed chiefly of young and comparatively unimportant local organizations, to assume this responsibility or authority, for such a course would open the door to the organization of half a dozen such "National Associations," each of whom would adopt its own code of rules, and then would come such a condition of things as now marks the game of croquet, in which each city and town has a way of playing the game, differing from every other. In seeking for some organization which would be sufficiently influential to be empowered to issue a regular code of rules for the amateur fraternity, it seems to us that the college clubs would furnish just the organization required. In the first place, an Association composed of college club representatives could readily embrace every club of the kind in the country, thereby becoming a real representative body. Secondly, there is no questioning the fact, that not only would the best intelligence of the ball-playing brotherhood be brought to bear upon the legislation of this class, in adopting a regular code of rules, but the best and most honorable influences would also, in such case, aid in establishing the game in its thorough integrity. Our experience of National Associations of base-ball players has led us to have little faith in them as institutions meriting that obedience to the laws they enact, which should properly belong to a thoroughly able, representative, legislative body. In the effort to solve the problem of constructing an effective National Amateur Association, we have come to the conclusion that it is to the college clubs alone we can safely look for the establishment of an Association and the enactment of a code of laws which shall command the merited respect and obedience of the entire amateur fraternity of the country. In the meantime, State Amateur Associations can be beneficially organized, which shall be empowered to regulate the intercourse of State clubs, and, if they choose, to enact a special code of "championship rules." But in regard to the regular playing code of rules, there should be but one code governing the entire amateur class, and that code should be the one adopted by a Convention of the college clubs, as they are really the model amateur clubs of the country.

An Oregon Genius.—It appears from the *San Francisco Chronicle* that Oregon possesses a youthful genius who deserves more than passing notice. This is his story as told by that journal:

A caveat was recently filed in the Patent Office at Washington for a new motive power, which, in the opinion of experienced engineers and scientific gentlemen who have examined the working model, will not only supplant the present steam engine in use but largely increases the uses to which machinery can be applied with profit. Strange to say, this invention which promises such great results is the product of a boy but eighteen years of age, who was born and reared in the backwoods of Oregon. Frank C. Crouch is the name of the young genius. His father settled on a farm in Douglas county over twenty years ago, and the only educational advantages enjoyed by the young man were those afforded by the country school.

At a very early age he displayed a wonderful ingenuity in the construction of windmills and water-wheels. Before he was ten years of age he built a toy-sawmill, which was the wonder of the inhabitants for miles around. Natural philosophy and chemistry were his favorite studies, not only faithfully followed in school, but fairly revelled in out of school hours. He was continually testing the theories of the book by actual experiments, and produced results which astonished his elders. The frivolous amusements of other children he turned from, and his entire time was occupied not only in practically demonstrating what he saw in print, but in endeavoring to improve upon the original. Up to four years ago, when he went with his father to Portland, he never had seen a telegraphic instrument, yet instead of having its operation explained to him, he astonished the operator with a more profound elucidation of its workings than the operator himself could have given. Upon his return home he constructed an instrument, made a battery, and in a rude way could telegraph with it. He came near losing his life at this period, from the strength of a battery which he had constructed, receiving a shock which laid him up for a month. In this connection it may be stated that this young man has perfected a system of telegraphy whereby messages may be sent and received on board a train of cars, whether standing still or moving at the rate of fifty miles an hour. The young man fully explained this system to a Chicago reporter, showing plainly that it is feasible, but as his application for a patent is not yet filed, it would be unfair to make it public.

This system also renders collisions impossible and greatly reduces the chances of accidents of all kinds. It has been tested on twelve miles of road and found to work like a charm. Another of his inventions, from which his friends and practical machinists expect great results, is a self-regulating water feed, to be applied to boilers. The great majority of explosions which occur are caused by the water getting low through the carelessness of one of the boiler men. By this arrangement, the water in the boiler will always be kept at a certain height, rendering explosions impossible, requiring no attention from the engineer, and dispensing with the water gauges. Among all the inventions to which this young man has applied his attention, the one which he was most desirous of bringing before the public, was his steam-engine.

His father, who is a plain, practical farmer, endeavored to turn his attention from machinery and electricity to the every-day life of the farm, but finally he was persuaded by the untold opportunities of the youth to go with him to Portland, and endeavor to get some capitalist to supply the money to bring out the inventions of the boy. They met with poor success in Portland, and the father, whose means are limited, endeavored to persuade his son to return home. The young man would not listen to such a proposition, and finally induced his father to come on down to San Francisco. They met with poor success here at first, but young Crouch finally succeeded in getting a miniature model of his engine manufactured. He took it down to San Jose, where several old friends of the Crouch family reside.

At Judge Hester's residence, on the Alameda Road, the little engine, with but two-inch cylinder and two-inch stroke, was applied to a large straw-trout, ordinarily worked by a very strong mule. It easily handled the machine and accomplished work which the mule could not, cutting off grapevines and barrel-hoops as readily as straw.



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A. MODEL WIFE.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

I should desire my wife to be
The pride of womankind,
Who'd give me love a priceless store
And not much of her mind;
Who for my sake would go with me
Where'er my fortune drew,
And leave her cherished home behind
And—well, her mother, too.
The beauty of her smile should make
A sunshine in the room;
Her hands should bless the household ways
And not mislead the broom.
And at the marriage altar she
With graciousness that charms
Should bring me an undying trust
And—oh, or two good farms.
The charm of wifely patience sweet
Should crown her like the sun;
She should be honored for true worth
And not cook stews too done.
Beneath her spell my home should be
An honor to myself;
Where she should greet me with a smile
Though I came in at twelve.
Humility should be her pride,
Which let the light of heaven
Her lips should only breathe of truth
And let the onions be.
The light of truest faith should make
Its home within her eyes,
And she should make a heaven of earth—
And iron my bosoms nice.
Her gentleness should be the kind
Which a true heart admires,
And her affection ne'er grow cold
While making earthy fires.
Her constancy of love should prove
That time more closely knits;
She should not sigh when fortunes frown
Nor give her neighbors fits.
A noisier life there could not be
If I had such a one;
I'd rest contentedly to know
My cooking would be done.

Strange Stories.

ADMIRABLE CRICHTON;
Scholar, Swordsman and Musician.
A STORY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

BY ADOLPHE PENNE.

BORN in Scotland in 1551; a Master of Arts at fourteen years of age; in his thirty-first year holding a solemn disputation before the University of Padua, and for six hours arguing with the greatest professors in Europe; a year after, at Mantua, meeting in single fight the Count of Castiglione, surnamed the Bully of Italy, and stretching him dead upon the field. As skilled in music, too, as he was wise in the ancient love of bookish knowledge or learned in the quarte and tierce of the fencing school. Where then could the great Duke of Mantua find a better preceptor to his son and heir, Vincenzo Gonzaga, than the man known far and wide as the Admirable Crichton?
A short six months had Crichton taught the heir of Mantua's duke when the carnival time arrived.
Master and pupil had not learned to love each other, for there was not a single thought in common between Crichton, soul of honor and heart of gold, and the purse-proud lord, born to power, but mean at heart.
Right gladly would the Scot have quitted Mantua, but that for a year he had given his word to abide in the service of the duke.
Then, too, there was another tie that bound the blue-eyed Scot to the sunny Italian city.
Wandering one day in a narrow street that led from the grand square of the city, a girlish voice, sweet as the notes of the linnets, warbling a simple love song, fell upon his ears.
Though musician as he was, the young Scot was impressed at once by the capability of the evidently uncultured voice.
"Sweet as the mermaid's song!" he murmured, as he halted spellbound and listened to the wild, fresh notes.
And then, as the last lingering cadence floated upon the air, Crichton raised his eyes to the casement above him, and through the lattice saw a face as fair as the song was sweet.
A blue-eyed girl, with red-gold hair, the very Madonna of the painter, type so rare of Italian beauty that one might search for many weeks from the mountains of the north to the sands of the south and yet not find a maid blessed with the face that the artist's pencil had given to the Virgin Mother.
"No dream, but a saint from heaven!" Crichton cried, aloud.
The maiden heard the words, looked down in surprise, blushed when she saw the enraptured cavalier gazing so fixedly upon her, then cast down her sewing and fled.
The disappearance of the beautiful girl woke Crichton rudely from his dream of bliss.
Long he waited, but the maiden appeared not again at the lattice. The Scot returned to the palace, but that night, when the moon came out clear and full, with his guitar the Scot stood beneath the window, and many a soft love note throbbled on the air, as, with skillful fingers, he touched the magic strings.
What maiden loving music could resist the desire to listen when Admirable Crichton's fingers swept the strings of the light guitar?
Night after night he came and played beneath the window, and by day his walk led ever through the little street.
Like a shade he hovered about the foot-steps of the maiden when she sought the church at early mass or hastened to vespers in the twilight dim.
No mortal maid could resist such earnest and respectful devotion, coming, too, from a cavalier whose worth acknowledged no superior in all Mantua.
And so one night, when Crichton, as was his wont, hymned the praises of the unknown fair to the rising moon, the lattice window opened and the maiden in song answered.
The darkness of the night veiled the blushes which mantled on her cheeks as she listened to Crichton's tale, and softly made answer that to no lover had she pledged her heart.
The maiden's name was Catherine Braganza. Her father, a soldier of fortune, had perished upon the field of battle, and now an uncle, a goldsmith of Mantua, provided for her. The goldsmith was absent in Venice, and the maiden waited his return.
After this night no more did the notes of Crichton's guitar rise on the air beneath the window of the Madonna maid. The notes of music were not needed now to translate the vows of love; but the gallant, below the casement, and the maiden, looking through the lattice, held long and sweet converse together.
The last night of the carnival came. Crichton, detained by his duties at the palace, was late in seeking his love. The cathedral bells had told the hour of ten when Crichton turned from the grand square into the little street. He hastened to his accustomed post beneath the lattice window, but, to his astonishment, Catherine was not at the casement in anxious expectation.
A dim foreboding of evil filled the heart of Crichton. He had come directly from the palace,

guitar in hand, only wrapping a mantle around him.
With anxious and trembling fingers he struck the strings of the instrument.
Almost at the first note, the lattice opened and Catherine appeared. Even in the dim light, for the casement was in the shadow, although the room shone bright, Crichton could see that the face of his lady was pale, and that tear-drops were in her eyes.
"Oh, the Virgin be praised that you are here and safe!" the maiden murmured, as she leaned from the lattice and extended both of her white arms toward her lover.
Crichton was astonished at the fervent exclamation.
"I have been detained at the palace," he said. "I feared you would chafe at my long delay."
"It is more than that that excites my fears," she replied. "I expected you at least two hours ago, and sat here with the casement open. A band of maskers came laughing through the street from the grand square, and halted here, beneath the window. I hastily retired, not wishing to attract their observation; judge then of my horror when a ladder was raised against my window, and a young cavalier entered. I would have shrieked in fright, but terror bound my tongue. The man addressed me in terms of courtly compliment, said that I had inspired his wits, and prayed me to believe that he loved me beyond expression. Alarmed, I bade him begone, or I would call aloud for the city watch. He laughed, and cried that the soldiers of the watch would think twice before they meddled with his pleasure. Then with scornful accent he mentioned your name, and asked me if I called for protection when you told a tale of love. I knew not what to say, and could only beseech him to be gone. Unheeding my words, he told me that he was one of the greatest lords in Mantua, and asked me if I preferred a renegade Scot to a native-born Italian. What more he would have said I know not, but at that moment one of his followers in the street cried out that there was an armed body of men approaching down the square. The gallant at once retreated; but as he descended from the window, he exclaimed: 'Tell this Admirable Crichton, that despite his skill, an Italian blade may yet find a scabbard in his Scotch body.' Then they departed, and I saw no more of them."
"Fear not, dear love!" Crichton said, soothingly. "Some of the wild gallants of the court have tracked my footsteps hither, but the boldest of them will think twice ere they brave me openly."
Hardly had the words left his lips when a slight scream came from the girl.
Six masked men, swords gleaming in their hands, came from the grand square, and advanced rapidly toward Crichton.
Their intention was far too plain to be misunderstood.
"Fear not!" Crichton cried, addressing the maid; "see me slay these bravos!"
The guitar he cast to the ground, and the long rapier he plucked from its scabbard. With his back against the wall, he awaited the assault, his mantle wrapped around his left arm.
Three straight thrusts he parried with a single sweep of his keen blade, and three desperate slashes fell harmless upon the cloaked arm.
Then, with the flash of the circle of the sweeping blade, the foremost mask went down, his forehead cloven open; a thrust in the throat paid the second, and he dropped like lead. Springing from the shelter of the wall, lion-like, an upper cut and two straight thrusts, and three more masks, disabled, fell.
The last one of the three, desperate, lunged at Crichton's heart; the party sent the light blade whizzing through the air, and as the Scot's arm was drawn back, to deliver the finishing thrust, the man threw off his mask, and revealed the features of Crichton's pupil, Vincenzo Gonzaga.
"Spare me!" cried the Italian.
Crichton lowered his hand, took the blade in his fingers, and held the rapier toward the baffled assassin.
Pardon me, my lord, he cried; "I but struck in mine own defense. If you wish my life, it is yours for the asking."
Such nobility of soul would have almost made a statue cry aloud in admiration, but the base Italian, hot with wine, and chafed at the defeat of his hired bravos, seized the sword and plunged it into Crichton's breast, then fled like the guilty villain that he was.
A single shriek came from Catherine's lips. Leaping from the window, she fell lifeless upon her lover's body.
And thus, by a coward's hand, was stilled the bravest heart that ever beat within the bosom of a Scot. Thus fell the Admirable Crichton.

A Christmas in Cathay,
OR,
HOW OUR DINNER WAS SPOILED.
BY WALTER A. ROSE.

"Now you must be sure to remember that we sail again on the twenty-third at noon-time, Miss Mabel, and if you are not down from the city at that hour, I shall go away in the bitterness of full belief that you don't like either my vessel or myself," said Captain Sargent, skipper of the steamer Undine, as he stood near the gangway of his pretty craft and bade a temporary adieu to one of the passengers who had journeyed with him from Hong Kong.
"Rest assured we will return in good time, captain; you may blame me if any of us are late, for I can persuade mamma into anything, and from what you have told me about Foochow, I don't think Madeline will wish to prolong her stay there. Good-by! If you should run up to the city you'll not forget to visit us at the Gilmore's I hope."
"Not if I know myself, ma-belle," muttered the skipper, as the bright girl sprang lightly into a sampan, that, propelled by the sculls and oars of four stalwart Chinese, was soon gliding swiftly up the river Min.
The Undine of which vessel I was chief officer, belonged to a firm in Hong Kong, and was engaged in what was known as the East coast trade—that is, she touched at Swatow and Amoy on both the passages up and down to Foochow. The trip was always considered a very pleasant one, and we often carried passengers the round trip for the benefit of their healths. The river Min, which rises in the Woo-ee (Bohea) hills and flows through the city of Foochow, is not navigable for any craft larger than a flat-bottomed lighter, and therefore all vessels have to discharge and take in their cargoes at Pagoda anchorage, which is midway between the city proper and sharp peak, where the river joins the sea.
Upon the voyage of which I now speak we had six or seven cabin passengers, three of whom were of the gentler sex. The gentlemen were bound to Foochow on business, the ladies merely took the trip for the purpose of escaping from the tedious monotony of society routine in Victoria. Mrs. Morris, who chaperoned her daughters, was the wife of a major in the 99th regiment, which was then quartered in the

Murray barracks at Hong-Kong. She was an old campaigner, had followed her husband about the world ever since he gained his lieutenantcy and married youth, and was well liked by the "subs" of the 99th for her general geniality—and at least one of her daughters.
Madeline, the eldest of these sirens, was a pretty fair specimen of "a garrison girl." Report said that she had possessed some charms when she had joined the regiment, some twelve years before, and that in those days she was the recipient of many matrimonial proposals from ardent but impecunious ensigns; but Miss Morris played for higher stakes, and as fortune had been fickle, she found herself *passée*, and thirty-three, and, worst of all, single.
Mabel was many years younger than her sister—in fact, she had only finished her education and joined her parents in China a few months prior to our first acquaintance. Very beautiful indeed was this young lady; her figure was faultless and her features so exquisitely molded that she seemed one of Dame Nature's masterpieces. Her skin was smooth as satin, her complexion clear and warm, her every movement graceful as a fairy's. Eyes, dark as night and fringed with lashes that swept the cheek beneath; eyes that sparkled with vivacious merriment or seemed melting in unshed tears were hers, and the ivory-white forehead above them was surmounted by a gorgeous wealth of glossy hair, black as the raven's plume. I had heard her praises sung before she came aboard the Undine, and was able fully to realize why the whole masculine community were raving about her ere I had known her an hour.
Captain Sargent was about thirty years of age, and frightfully susceptible in *affaires de coeur*, even for a sailor. He had been reared in "the Flowery Land," and having had but few opportunities to mingle in the society of ladies was very prone to regard Caucasian dames as only one degree removed from the angelic host. Before we dropped anchor in the Min, I knew his heart was lost utterly and irrevocably to the bright-eyed beauty whom we called Queen Mab. The evening prior to the day fixed for our departure, Captain Sargent went up to the city in his gig, and as I guessed when I saw him start, he returned the next morning with a copper kettle adorned with a vicious nature, a passenger in the cabin, a conceited puppy, named Rivington, who was connected with the Wong-nei-chong Hong, sported an eye-glass, and considered himself a lady-killer.
The Undine was delayed for some hours at Sharp Peak, as there was not sufficient water to cross the bar, and before we got past the White Dog's nose a fog overspread the ocean that the skipper determined to anchor for the night upon those islands. The mist did not lift until late the next day, so Captain Sargent determined to shorten his journey to Amoy by going through the Hae-tan Straits, a passage carefully avoided by sailing-vessels, on account of its many shoals and its evil reputation as a rendezvous for piratical craft. The fog came down again before we were half-way through the straits, and we had to anchor again.
"You may make up your minds to spend Christmas day afloat, ladies," said the captain, as we sat at the supper-table. "We could not reach Amoy in time to enjoy ourselves ashore, so I intend to remain where we are. We'll make ourselves as jolly, however, as though we were all blood relations of Mark Tapley, and I shall expect every one to contribute to the general amusement fund."
The ladies entered into the arrangement very willingly, and though the weather was not particularly cold, the skipper ordered the steward to light a fire in the cabin stove, which was a cunning contrivance that would sustain an almost perpetual fire, and adapted for the distillation of hot beverages of a vicious nature. We sat around that stove and we drank toast to absent friends, spun yarns by the fathom, became sentimental over Mabel's sweet-home songs, and outrageously merry over Mrs. Morris' garrison reminiscences. Hot whisky and Mabel's beauty had rendered Rivington ludicrously inebriated, and he essayed to sing in aristocratic accents a pathetic ballad about a broken heart, which the quartermaster brought to an abrupt conclusion by striking eight bells. Then we went on deck and sat down to a feast of Malay sailors by singing a carol—fearfully out of time—shaking hands all round in an idiotic kind of way, and wishing everybody generally a Merry Christmas. I let the second and third mates keep the rest of the anchor-watches that night.
The weather was clearer the next morning, and the uprising sun soon scattered the remnants of the fog; but Captain Sargent said we might as well where we were until the following day. The third-mate, who acted as purser, had taken care that the Commodore had provided any quantity of good things for our Christmas dinner, and it was decided by vote that it should be eaten at one o'clock, so as to give us plenty of time for fun after it was digested.
We had done justice to the turkey, the roast beef and *entremets*, and were just preparing to assault the blue-blazing plum-pudding, when old Abdoel, one of the Malay *seamen*, put his ugly old phiz through the skylight.
"Mute, three large junks are coming!" (Mr. Mate, three large junks are coming!) he said.
Muttering a savage anathema against Chinese mariners in general, I went on deck. There, sure enough, I saw three tai-munks coming down toward us and evidently acting in concert, though pretending not to be even aware of our presence. With the aid of a powerful binocular glass I could see that the junks were all heavily armed, and their long, low hulls indicated that their calling was not that of honest traders. I called the skipper, who took in the situation at a glance.
"Heave short as quick as you can. Mr. Pinkham, get steam as soon as possible. Mr. Southgate, let the quartermaster clear away the guns and get the small-arms and ammunition ready," he cried.
While the chief-engineer and second-mate were attending to their duties, I got my men to the capstan, and had the anchor peak by the time the banked fires had been raked into a sufficient glow to generate a full head of steam.
"It's just as well for us to clear out of this," said the skipper, when I had seen the anchor hauled and had walked aft. "Those three fellows would be too much for us, I think, and the ladies—Ah!"
"Captain Sargent sprang to the telegraph and signaled: 'full speed astern' for the steamer had run right upon one of the treacherous sand-banks which lay *perdu* beneath the smooth and sheeny surface of the sea. I jumped to the hand-lead and found that the Undine had gone so fast up the shoal that there was only half a fathom water just abaft the fore-rigging; the engine powerless to back her off, so I told Southgate to bend the kedge anchor on a stout hawser while I got the glee ready for lowering. The junks were pretty close to us by this time, and evidently appreciated our dilemma, for they shortened sail and bore down in line.
"Hold on that boat, Mr. Carter," said the skipper, as a shot, the first evidence of hostilities, whistled over the Undine. "We can't kedge her off under fire. Man the guns, serve

out the rifles and cutlasses, and let's make as good a fight as we can."
We had a crew of ninety Malays, tough little fellows, many of whom had doubtless been pirates themselves on their own coast, and who were as fond of fighting as their native forefathers. They hated the Chinese, had an utter disregard for life, and under Caucasian leadership, would dare anything. Southgate took charge of the swivel-carriage 24-pounder on the forecastle; Waters of the two little nines amidships, and I joined the captain and three engineers who were blazing away with Minies on the quarter-deck.
"Hand down those rifles as you fire them and we'll reload them. A soldier's family ought to know how to do that." It was Mrs. Morris who spoke; she was standing on the companion-stair as cool as a cucumber, though the pirates were sending in their shot pretty fast. A few seconds later I glanced down the skylight as I passed down my weapon. The three ladies were busy as keepers at the *batterie*, loading and handling the rifles as if they were used to the work. Rivington was not there—I supposed he was helping at the main-deck guns. But the affray was too hot to last. We were fearfully overmatched, and I was beginning to think of what would be the probable fate of the poor ladies if we had to succumb, when a well-directed shot of Southgate's carried away the mainmast of the largest junk. Almost simultaneously the Serang yelled:—"Kappal-api!" (a steamer).
I glanced in the direction the boatswain indicated, and saw the line of smoke which told of approaching aid. If we could only hold out a little longer! Soon the pirates detected the steamer, and determined to board us at once. One of the junks came sweeping down, rounded to under our quarter and cast grapnels aboard.
"Mari de plakkan, sam orang!" (lay aft all hands), cried the skipper, and at it went, hammer and tongs—or rather, pikes and cutlasses. The boarders were armed with short, straight swords, resembling overgrown daggers, and they swarmed over the side of the pretty Undine pell-mell. But the Malays were in their element, and they fought like demons, setting their filed teeth, yelling their native war-cries, and dealing death around. There were at least two hundred men aboard the junk, but our brave fellows kept beating them back with severe loss for fully ten minutes. At length about forty scrambled on deck amidships, and as the Malays rushed thither to repel them, another party of five sprung up the mizen chains. Captain Sargent dashed at them, supported only by Abdoel; I followed, but the skipper was cut down by the head man, or pirate chief, in person, before I could gain his side. Right out from the companion-way I saw flash out a fork of flame, and the chief rolled dead upon the deck. Standing at the head of the stairs was Mabel, revolver in hand. A few quick passes and Abdoel and I had placed the chief's body *quod hors de combat*. I sprang toward my prostrate captain, but Mabel was there before me; his head was raised upon her shoulder, her raven tresses fanned his face.
"Jagga jagga, de plakkan Mabel, tuan!" (look out, take care aft, Mr. Mate!) I heard an unearthly voice yell out. It was the *bandeddi*, or cook's mate, of the Undine, a poor, half-witted fellow, and he held aloft a blazing torch. I guessed what he was about to do instantaneously. Not a second was to be lost. I caught up the captain in my arms: "Below, quick!" was all I could ejaculate. Mabel sprang down the hatchway after me; another instant of suspense and then there was a mighty explosion that shook the steamer from stem to stern, and raised her to heaven violently, while a shower of riven spars and splinters rained upon her deck—the pirate had blown up.
The faithful *bandeddi* had sold his life for us; he had leaped aboard the junk and fired the magazine!
We were safe then, for the other miscreants had already hoisted every sail to get out of the way of the American steamer *Fohkein*, which was coming to our assistance. She towed us off the bank and lay by us until we were ready to proceed. Most of our crew were more or less wounded, and ten were killed outright. We thought at first that Rivington had fallen, as he was missing. He did fall—in the ladies' estimation when he crawled out of the lazarette after the fighting was over. Captain Sargent's wound was not very serious, and he had a good nurse in the bonny girl who shot the pirate chief. He was acting nurse the last time I saw him—tending Mabel's baby, in which he had a joint interest, for he married the charming girl before another Christmas day was celebrated.

Weekly Budget.

Persian Punishments.—The old saw, "unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians," would seem to have some foundation in fact, since we find a mode of capital punishment still in vogue in Persia that we read of as having been employed upon Bessus, the murderer of King Darius, though many, if not most of the laws of the present day, are of considerably more recent origin. These laws may be divided into two great classes—the ecclesiastical and the secular; both of equal power in the state, or, at least, so equally balanced, that any preponderance arises from the personal feelings and character of the reigning monarch. The former, like that of all Mohammedan nations, is founded on the Koran, and also on the sayings and precepts ("Sonna") of the immediate successors of the Prophet, and is administered by the priests alone. The second is called the "Urf," and has for judges, the king as supreme, and under him all the secular officers of the nation, any of whom are competent (legally, if not actually), to try and judge cases, and act as civil magistrates, with power to inflict, according to their several rank, any punishment short of death—except in the rare cases where the Shah delegates that also to princes of the blood-royal, or to rulers of distant provinces. The latter law, then—or the *Urf*—is really the national traditional customs handed down from remote antiquity, and as each expounder of it is guided by his own opinion or interest, it is of a somewhat arbitrary nature. In the "Sherrah," or *Urf* of the Faith, who receives the large salary of two thousand toman a year, is the principal judge in each separate district or town; and, in the larger ones, there is another functionary, called the *Canzee*, assisted by a council of those holy rogues, the mollas.
It may be at once stated that bribery and corruption of the very worst description are of the most common occurrence; while the difficulty, on the other hand, would be to find an honest judge, or perhaps it would be more strictly true to say a man who had not got his price, for the higher judges are honest so long as the temptation is not too great; and the only approach to anything like justice in the *Urf* courts is owing to their being an appeal to them from the decisions of the lower officials. The king himself not infrequently puts great nobles up for sale, who, if they succeed in buy-

ing themselves in, are restored to favor, but, if overbid, lose their commands and honors to the successful bidder. The following story which we take from Fraser's *Persia*, gives a good idea of the oppressions which take place.
"An acquaintance of the writer of these pages, while he lodged in a certain town, was alarmed by hearing, in a neighboring house, a sort of peridical punishment going on daily. Heavy blows were given, and a person was continually crying out 'Aman! aman!' (Mercy! mercy!)—I have nothing! Heaven is my witness, I have nothing! Upon inquiry, he learned that the sufferer was a merchant reputed to be very rich, who afterward confessed to him that, having understood the governor of the place was determined to have a share in his wealth, and expecting to be put to the torture, he had resolved to habituate himself to the endurance of pain, in order to be able to resist the threatened demands. He had brought himself to bear one thousand strokes of the stick, and, as he was able to counterfeit exhaustion, he hoped to be able to bear as many blows as they would venture to inflict, short of death, without conceding any of his money.
The king usually does his share of duty as a judge in a business-like manner, holding two courts daily for the redress of grievances, when any one can have access to him, though perhaps any European listener would be somewhat surprised at hearing such summary judgments as 'Off with his head,' and 'Cut out his tongue,' or, should one of the parties be considered too argumentative, at the order 'Give him the shoe,' which means the instant application of a heavy blow on the mouth from an iron-heeled slipper, which, says Fowler, 'is pretty effective, and frequently ends the assize; but 'Turn up his heels' is deemed a still sounder argument," as we need hardly doubt it would be.
It could not interest the general reader were it to dilate upon the particular laws and penalties enacted for each species of misdemeanor, though we may mention that, as there is no system of convict-labor, the government can not afford to keep men in confinement, and so capital and corporal punishments, with fines, are all that offenders have to dread. Murder and high-handed robbery are generally punished by death; but as the former is commutable to the heir of the deceased, who has the privilege of doing as he chooses with the murderer, a premium is offered on this species of crime, impatient heirs not unfrequently getting their relation put out of the way, and then, by this law, shielding their tool from any but nominal punishment. Either highway robbery or simple theft is to be compromised by a fine, though, by the law of the Boran, a thief is subjected to amputation of an arm, hand, ear, or nose, as the rank of a limb thus mutilated is at once dipped into boiling oil, mortification rarely follows, and the wound soon heals. For other offenses, such as assault, or any injury to the person, etc., the old Jewish *lex talionis* is enforced, unless, indeed, a pecuniary equivalent is given to the prosecutor, or a sufficiently large bribe to the judge, either of which will always prevent any other punishment from being inflicted.
As for the forms of capital punishment in Persia, some of them are too horrible to mention—strangulation or suffocation being among the least offensive methods employed. Sometimes, though rarely, in the case of relations, one life, when offered, is accepted in lieu of the one forfeited. When the king decides on the death of any of the great nobles, or rulers, a special messenger is at once started off with the warrant. He rides night and day, until he reaches his destination, when, without any delay, he at once goes to the man, is admitted as coming from the king, and drawing the warrant with one hand, and his scimitar with the other, he then and there kills him, without usually any attempt at resistance being made. Besides those resulting in death, there are other punishments in use almost equally barbarous: mutilation of the limbs we have mentioned; but scooping out the eyes, cutting out the tongue, besides boring the latter or nose with an awl, bastinadoing and whipping, are common. Many of the Shahs have been most ferocious monarchs. Agha Mahomet, a very ugly man used to look at his hideous countenance, who dared to look at his hideous countenance, while the late Shah executed 1,200 men on one day at Kasrine, and had their heads rolled into heaps in the bazars; he also caused his uncle, Saduk Khan, to be built up into a room, and left there to die, and this after a promise that he would not injure him. Regarding cutting out the tongue, Fowler makes a very extraordinary statement in his second volume; he says: "It was a Persian custom, and is still, that if it is cleared out of the root, there is no impediment whatever to speech; but if a portion be left, it is fatal to all other articulation. Of the former, I have had evidence, having heard a man who was tongueless talk with his accustomed rapidity." The italics are my own, and by them I would draw attention to this apparent impossibility, for though it is not difficult to understand, that, after the loss of this member, sound could be produced as vulgarly supposed to be dependent on the combined movements of the lips and tongue, could be retained.
We have hardly mentioned the bastinado, because Turkish travelers and other oriental writers have made every one conversant with the manner of its use; but the following account proves how severely it is inflicted even upon those of superior rank. "On going to the bazar a few days ago I observed three capstans (others of the army) lying on the city streets, with their legs bound to sticks of timber, and they trembling and writing under the severity of the whip, one of whom died the day following from the severity with which he had been beaten, and subsequent exposure to cold. The soles of their feet, when I saw them, were bruised almost to a jelly; the legs were naked and bloody; they were agonized with pain, and shaking with chills, there being snow on the ground around them; and twelve or fifteen more were afterward exposed there in a similar condition."
In conclusion, we must mention the place of refuge or sanctuary in which offenders of any dye, even the deepest, such as murderers, or those guilty of high treason, are perfectly secure, though the locality is a somewhat peculiar one, being no other than the royal stables. Here any criminal may remain indefinitely, being fed the while at the royal expense, until he either secures a pardon, or is induced by some other means to desert his haven of refuge. It is not long ago since a Persian noble of the highest rank, who had himself aspired to the throne, escaped to this place, and stayed there until pardoned for his offense. Some few of the mosques are endowed with the same privilege, though to a less degree.

THESE are in the refreshing Western style of persons: "Mr. Waggoner found fault with the beef at a Memphis hotel, the other morning, and the corner made \$3 on him." "Peter Ink, an old citizen of Knox County, Ohio, was blotted out the other day, age 76."